ASIA

SPEECHES AND WRITINGS OF SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

"I have passed a quarter of a century among you, and during that period of time I have not known what it was to suffer an unkindness from a native of India. During that period I have been in the service of the people of India, and have eaten their salt. And I hope to devote to their service what still remains to me of active life."—From the Presidential Address to the Fifth Indian National Congress, Bombay. 1889.

FIRST EDITION

G. A. NATESAN & CO., MADRAS.

PRICE RS. THREE.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN.

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NOTE.

The Publishers have made every endeavour to make this collection comprehensive and up-to-date. The matter was selected by Sir William Wedderburn himself. The first part contains the full text of his two Congress Presidential Addresses; the second, all his speeches in the House of Commons; the third, Miscellaneous Speeches on a variety of topics relating to India; the fourth, "Contributions to the Press" comprising his writings to the daily and the periodical press on Indian Questions; the fifth, "Personalia" being his speeches and writings in appreciation of his Indian and European friends; and the sixth, Replies to Addresses and Entertainments given in his honour on various occasions in India and England. In part seven, entitled "Appreciations" we have a selection of tributes paid to Sir William's services to India by his numerous English and Indian friends and admirers.

THE PUBLISHERS.

Allan Octavian Hume

Father of the Indian National Congress

A MEMOIR BY

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BART.

WITH PORTRAIT

'The purpose of this memoir' is, to use the words of Sir William Wedderburn, "to set forth the work of teaching of a man experienced in Indian affairs who combined political insight with dauntless courage and untiring industry." "But specially it has seemed to me a duty to place before the youth of India the example of Mr. Hume's strenuous and unselfish life, and so bring into fresh remembrance the stirring words he uttered of encouragement and reproof, both alike prompted by his love of India and his anxious care for her future. "Excelsior!" was his motto. His ideal was indeed a high one—the regeneration, spiritual, moral, social and political, of the Indian people. But he taught that such a consummation could not be attained without the solid work-a-day qualities of courage, and industry, and self-denial."

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A TRIBUTE.

IT is with feelings of inexpressible sorrow that I attempt to pen this little note. About the middle of November 1916, I wrote to Sir William Wedderburn requesting him to accord permission to me to bring out a volume of his Speeches and Writings. He was good enough to comply with my request and also to help me in the selection of the matter. But for the exigencies of business this volume should have been out by the end of last year, as originally announced, and it is to me nothing short of a misfortune that I have been denied the privilege of presenting him with a copy of this book.

In my letter to Sir William regarding the selection of matter for his speeches and writings, I suggested among other things, the need for giving prominence to his many contributions on the condition of the Indian raiyat, as I knew from personal conversations and correspondence, which it was my inestimable privilege to have with him, how deeply interested he was in the improvement of the economic condition of the Indian raiyats. It is sad to recall the following extract from his letter dated the 7th January, 1917:—

I am very glad that you will give special prominence to the Famine Union and proposed Enquiry into the economic condition of the villages, as the woes of the Indian raiyat have been from the very beginning the stimulus which has kept me tied to the labouring oar of Indian Reform. In the "Skeleton at the (Jubilee) Feast," Congress Green-book No. 1, you will find the summing up of my case, comprising (1) *my demand for enquiry sent to every member of the House of Commons,* (2) *the details of efforts to relieve the raiyats, frustrated by official opposition, and* (3) *the challenge to contradict any one of my*

incriminating statements. The indictment was met by the usual method in such cases, "the conspiracy of silence."

Illiteracy being a vital cause of the raiyat's trouble, I would also ask your attention to my article supporting Mr. Gokhale's Bill of free and compulsory elementary education.

As regards the pressing question of Self-Government, you will find my most recent views in the Joint Note of Sir Krishna Gupta and myself, and also in the annual reports of the British Committee over my signature. As the key to the situation, you will find in articles in, and letters to, magazines in England, my insistence on "Public Servants" remaining servants of the public, and not usurping the position of masters. When a member of the permanent civil service steps into the Viceroy's Executive Council or "Cabinet," he ceases to be a servant and becomes one of the governing body. The whole force of Indian public opinion should, therefore, be directed against the statutory provision which gives the Civil Service three out of five seats in the Viceroy's Cabinet. This is what creates the "Bureaucracy" which is literally the "rule of the officials."

I have no doubt that this volume will be most welcome and dear to every Indian. Besides serving as a history of the politics of India during a most eventful period in the growth of its National life, it will be an imperishable record of the noble and unselfish efforts of a great and saintly Englishman who for over half a century was unceasingly and unostentatiously labouring for the advancement of the people of India.

I can hazard the remark that the reader who attempts to form an estimate of his services to India by the number of his published speeches and writings or by a record of his work before the public gaze is bound to do serious injustice to his memory; for Sir William, the "hereditary friend of India," so quiet, so gentle, so unassuming, "lavishly spent his force, time, money and labour" for the benefit of India and its people and a great deal of his work was done by private interviews and corres-

pondence. His was a nature which scorned all publicity. Even among his intimate friends very few happen to know that every pie of his Indian pension—aye—a not inconsiderable portion of his private wealth, he spent in the service of India to which he had dedicated his life.

'India held his whole heart to the exclusion of every other subject'; his abounding love for the people of this country stood all tests and his faith in us was indeed "a part of his great personality."

Presiding over the fifth session of the Congress at Bombay Sir William thus spoke of his interest in the advancement of India:—

> *I have passed a quarter of a century among you and during that period of time I have not known what it was to suffer an unkindness from a native of India. During that period I have been in the service of the people of India and have eaten their salt. And I hope to devote to their service what still remains to me of active life.*

He lived another quarter of a century and lived it all for the sake of India and he lived it indeed to translate his noble resolve into action. When at the end of the year 1910 it was represented to him that in the best interests of India and with a view to cement the bonds of unity between Hindus and Mahomedans it was necessary that he should accept the Presidentship of the Congress of that year, Sir William, at the advanced age of 72 and in an indifferent state of health, responded at the risk of his life to the call made upon him. Only the other day I was informed by a member of the Party that has accompanied Mr. Montagu to India on his great mission, that Sir William forgetting his age and health volunteered to be of the party and but for the warning of his Doctor—alas! only too well justified by after-events—that he would not guarantee him life even for a journey from Gloucester to

London, he would have started for India. One might well exclaim in the words of a veteran Indian Publicist: "How many of us, children of the soil, whose bones will rest here, whose interests, sympathies and reminiscences are centred in this ancient land, can claim to have exhibited in the record of their life-work, the selfless devotion, the unflinching self-sacrifice and the supreme love for India and her peoples, which have always been the dominating features in the public career of Sir William Wedderburn."? It is pathetic to contemplate that Sir William who for years has been our trusted friend, philosopher and guide and in times of distress and despair, our beacon light, and who for years in cheerful co-operation, laboured with Hume, Dadabhai, Bonnerjee, Mehta and Gokhale for obtaining for India her proper place in the Empire, has passed away on the eve of great and momentous changes in the constitution of India.

In the words of Mr. Gokhale who ever regarded Sir William with filial affection, "he has believed in us in spite of the obloquy of his own countrymen. He has believed in us in spite of appearances. He has believed us in spite of ourselves. It is because he has so believed in us that he has been able to work through sunshine and storm and through good report and evil report. . . . . The picture of this great venerable rishi of modern times, who has done this work for us is a picture that is too venerable, too beautiful, too inspiring for words: it is a picture to dwell upon lovingly and reverentially and it is a picture to contemplate in silence."

Can the people of this land ever sufficiently repay their deep debt of gratitude to Sir 'William for all that he has hoped for us, for all that he has done for us, for all that he has borne and braved for us'?

30th Jan. 1918. G. A. NATESAN.

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PART I CONGRESS SPEECHES.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, BOMBAY CONGRESS, 1889.

[*The following is the full text of the Presidential Address delivered at the fifth Indian National Congress, held at Bombay in* 1889 :—]

INTRODUCTION.

I thank you, gentlemen, from the bottom of my heart for the great honour you have conferred upon me. I beg leave also to offer my acknowledgments to the mover, the seconder and the supporter of this resolution for the gracious terms in which they have referred to my past connection with India. After our long acquaintance it seems hardly necessary that I should assure you of my feelings of good-will towards the people of India. (*Cheers.*) But I will mention this one fact, that I have passed a quarter of a century among you, and during that period of time I have not known what it was to suffer an unkindness from a native of India. During that period I have been in the service of the people of India, and have eaten their salt. (*Loud and continued cheering.*) And I hope to devote to their service what still remains to me of active life. I take this chair to-day with much pleasure and pride. It warms my heart to receive this mark of confidence from the Indian people. And I rejoice to take part in a movement so well calculated to promote the best interests of India and of England. (*Cheers.*)

CONGRESS MOVEMENT.

I have watched from its commencement the movement which has now culminated in the Indian National

Congress. And in my humble judgment the movement is unmitigated good in its origin, objects, and its methods. As regards its historical orgin, we know that it is the direct result of the noblest efforts of British statesmanship: the natural and healthy fruit of higher education and free institutions freely granted to the people of India. Again, what are the practical objects of the Congress movement? They are to revive the National life, and to increase the material prosperity of the country; and what better object could we have before us? Lastly as regards our methods, they are open and constitutional, and based solely on India's reliance upon British justice and love of fair-play. Looking back to the history of the movement, there was one critical time in its development: that was about ten years ago. The leaven was then actually at work, though the purpose of the movement was not then so well defined, and it was unwisely sought to deal with it by a policy of repression. The results might have been disastrous. But happily that time of tribulation was cut short by the arrival of the greatest and best of all our Viceroys, the Marquis of Ripon. (*Loud cheers.*) By his wise and sympathetic policy Lord Ripon met and fulfilled the aspirations of the national movement. And on their side the people of India recognised that a government conducted in such a spirit could not be regarded as an alien rule. This was the meaning of the passionate demonstrations at the time of Lord Ripon's departure. You, gentlemen, will correct me if I am wrong in saying that those demonstrations were a popular declaration that on such terms British rule could be accepted as the national government of the Indian people. (*Long and enthusiastic cheers.*)

INDIAN AFFAIRS IN ENGLAND.

But, gentlemen, you know all this as well as I do,

and better. I think what you want to hear from me is not so much about your affairs in India as about your affairs in England. I have been nearly three years away from you, and have been studying English politics with special reference to Indian interests. And you would like to know what are the results. You will naturally ask me, what are the prospects of the Congress movement in England? What are the obstacles which we have to overcome? And what are the practical objects to which our activity can best be directed? To these inquiries I would reply generally that our hopes depend entirely upon the degree to which the British people can be induced to exert their power with reference to India. Our one great ultimate question is that of a Parliamentary control over Indian affairs. If that can be obtained, all will be well. The case of India in England is really a simple one. The Crown and Parliament of Great Britain have laid down certain broad and liberal principles for the administration of India, and have solemnly pledged themselves that these shall be acted on. With those principles the people of India are fully satisfied. But the difficulty is in the practice. For owing to the necessity of the case, the actual administration has to be entrusted to official agents in India. And the problem is, how under the circumstances can an effectual control be exercised from England so as to ensure these principles being carried out and these pledges fulfilled? Unfortunately there is one very serious fact which much enhances the difficulty of this problem, and it is this, that in certain important particulars the professional interests of our official administrators in India are in antagonism with the interests of the Indian tax-payer whose affairs they administer. This is a somewhat delicate matter, but it is an important one, and I feel it my duty to speak out

clearly. Perhaps also it is easier for me than for most people to speak freely regarding the Indian official class, and that for two reasons. First, because I am deeply interested personally in the honour of that class. (*Hear, hear.*) The Indian Civil Service has been a sort of hereditary calling in our family since the beginning of the century. My father entered the Civil Service in 1807; and my eldest brother followed him, until he lost his life in the Bengal mutinies. I came out shortly afterwards so that we are identified with what may be called the Indian official caste. The other reason is, because my complaint is against the system, not against the men who carry it out. On the contrary, it is my deliberate belief that the Indian Civil and Military Services have never been surpassed for honest hard work and unselfish devotion to duty. (*Cheers.*) Such being the case, I have no hesitation in repeating that the interests of the Indian services are in great measure antagonistic to the interests of the Indian tax-payer. The main interests of the Indian tax-payer are peace, economy and reform. But all those are necessarily distasteful to the civil and military classes. A spirited and well-equipped army naturally desires, not peace, but active service. And who can reasonably expect officials to love economy, which means reduction of their own salaries; or reform, which means restriction of their authority? (*Cheers and laughter.*) It cannot be expected that as a class our official administrators in India will work for peace, economy and reform. But this very fact makes all the more urgent the necessity for a control in England which shall be both vigilant and effectual. We have, therefore, now to see what is the state of that control. Is it strong, vigilant, and effectual? I am sorry to say that the answer to this question is highly unsatifactory.

A REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL.

A brief historical review will, I fear, show that, in the matter of Parliamentary control, things have gone from bad to worse, until they are now about as bad as can be. It is now more than a hundred years ago since Edmund Burke (*cheers*) pointed out the crying need for a strong impartial control in England over Indian affairs. And Mr. Fox's India Bill would have provided an organised machinery for exercising this control. But unhappily, owing to party struggles, unconnected with India, this Bill fell through, "India's Magna Charta," as Burke called it, and never since has a similar attempt been made. But although no remedy was then applied, things were not so bad until the passing of the Government of India Act in 1858, which transferred the government from the Company to the Crown. It is from that Act that I date our principal misfortunes. Till then we had two important safe-guards. The first was the wholesome jealousy felt by Parliament towards the East India Company as a privileged Corporation. The other was the necessity for the renewal of the Company's Charter at the end of every 30 years. At each of those renewals the Company's official administration had to justify its existence; there was a searching inquiry into grievances: and there never was a renewal without the grant to the public of important reforms and concessions suited to the progressive condition of Indian affairs. (*Cheers.*) Now unfortunately both those safe-guards are lost. The official administrators, who use to be viewed with jealousy, have now been admitted into the innermost sanctum of authority; and, as Council to the Secretary of State, form a secret Court of appeal for the hearing of all Indian complaints. They first decide all matters in India, and then

retire to the India Council at Westminster to sit in appeal on their own decisions. Such a method of control is a mockery, a snare and a delusion. This evil is very far-reaching, for when a decision is passed at the India Office the Secretary of State becomes committed to it, so that if an independent member tries to take up the case in the House of Commons, he finds himself confronted, not by a discredited company, but by the full power of the Treasury Bench. But the loss of the periodical inquiry once at least in 30 years, is perhaps a still more serious disaster. There is now no day of reckoning. And Indian reformers find all their efforts exhausted in the vain attempt to obtain a Parliamentary inquiry, such as was before provided, without demand and without effort. At the present moment such an inquiry, is much over-due. The last periodical inquiry was held in 1854, so that under the old system a Parliamentary inquiry would have been begun five years ago. But although such an inquiry has been constantly asked for, and has been promised, it has never been granted. No doubt, we shall manage to get it in the end, but it will be at the cost of much wasted energy.

HOW PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL WORKS IN PRACTICE.

I think, gentlemen, I have shown that the last state of our control is worse than the first. On the one hand, we have been deprived of our periodical inquiry into grievances, while on the other hand, all complaints are calmly referred for disposal to the very officials against whom the complaints are made. (*Hear, hear.*) I should like, by way of illustration, to give a couple of instances to show how this system works in practice. The first case I will take is that which was well-known, at the time, as the Break of Gauge controversy. In that matter General Strachey, as Public Works Member of the Viceroy's Coun-

cil, held his own against the whole united public opinion of India, European and Native, official and unofficial; and the railway gauge was fixed in the way he wished it. Later on, the question came in appeal to the Secretary of State. But by that time General Strachey had retired from his position in India, and had been appointed to the India Council (*laughter*) where he was the official advisor of the Secretary of State in matters relative to railways and public works. When, therefore, the public fancied they were appealing from the Government of India to the Secretary of State, they were really enjoying an appeal from General Strachey to himself. (*Laughter.*) This instance shows how the system of the India Council is even worse in fact than in theory. One might perhaps suppose that there being 15 members of the Council, one's grievance might come before those not personally affected. But such is not the case. Each member is considered as an expert, as regards his particular province or department, and is allowed to ride his own hobby, provided he allows his colleagues also to ride their own hobbies in the way they choose. The other instance is taken from my own experience, and has reference to Agricultural Banks. We cherish the idea that if he had fair play, the ryot might develop into a substantial yeoman instead of being the starveling he is. With a fertile soil, a glorious sun, and abundance of highly skilled labour, there is no reason why India should not become a garden if the ryot were not crushed by his debts. The only thing that is required is capital, in order to settle these old debts and make advances to the ryots on reasonable terms, so that they may be supplied with water for irrigation and manure. As you know, we prepared a practical scheme, founded on the German

system of peasant Banks, and got all the parties concerned agree to it. The Bombay Government approved of the experiment, which was to be on a very limited scale; and the scheme was forwarded for sanction to the Secretary of State by Lord Ripon's Government, Sir Evelyn Baring as Finance Minister having agreed to advance 5 lakhs of rupees for the settlement of the old debts. In England the scheme was well received. Mr. John Bright took the chair at a meeting in Exeter Hall in furtherance of the project, and each of the leading London daily papers expressed approval. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce also memorialised the Secretary of State in its favour. Well, gentlemen, this scheme entered the portals of the India Office, and never left it alive. ("*Shame!*") It was stabbed in the dark, no one knows by what hand or for what reason. Not long ago our friend Mr. Samuel Smith asked a question about it in the House of Commons; he inquired why the experiment recommended by Lord Ripon's Government was not allowed; and he was informed by Sir John Gorst that the scheme was not considered "practicable." Not practicable indeed! I wonder whether Sir J. Gorst is aware that in Germany alone there are 2,000 such Agricultural Banks in active working, and that throughout the continent of Europe it is admitted that without such financial institutions, the peasant proprietor is absolutely unable to maintain himself without falling into the clutches of the village usurer. I think I may say with confidence that the India Office has not yet heard the last word on the subject of Agricultural Banks in India. (*Cheers.*)

ORGANISED FORCES OF INDIA'S OPPONENTS IN ENGLAND.

I fear, therefore, that in reviewing the situation in

England, we must admit that the organised forces are in the hands of our opponents. The India Office is strong against us, together with the influence of the services and of society. The London Press is not favourable to us. And those members of Parliament who have Indian experience rank themselves mostly on the official side. On the other hand, we need not lose hope; for the spirit of the age is on our side. The forces of the new democracy are in favour of national aspirations; and wherever meetings of working men are addressed they are found willing, nay eager, that justice should be done to India. (*Cheers.*) My friend has referred to the constituency of North Ayrshire which has been good enough on the liberal side to choose me as its candidate; and he hoped that my invitation to come out here would not in any way damage my chances. I am very glad to assure you that so far from damaging my chances, it has very much raised me in their estimation. (*Loud cheers.*) As soon as my supporters in North Ayrshire learned that I had been invited to preside at this Congress, they were highly gratified, and resolutions were passed expressing strong sympathy with the Indian people. Nor is it on the Liberal side only that India has active sympathisers. She has many good friends among Conservatives; and to those I think we may reasonably appeal in the matter of Parliamentary control over Indian affairs. It is sometimes said that Conservatives walk in the footsteps of good reformers; that is, they stand now in the position that good reformers stood in perhaps 50 years ago. If this is so, we may well ask their help to carry through the reforms that commended themselves to Burke and to Fox; and still more to restore that 30 years periodical inquiry which was originally secured to us by the wisdom of our ancestors. (*Cheers.*)

CONGRESS AGENCIES IN LONDON.

And if the older organisations are against us, we have younger organisations which are making good and healthy growth. First and foremost, the Indian National Congress is becoming a house-hold word in England; and it will become a power in the State, if you continue patient, persistent, moderate. Then again, you have done well and wisely to establish organisation No. 2, a Congress Agency in London. In the Indian National Congress, the people of India, hitherto dumb, have found a voice. But the distance to England is great, and the agency is needed, like a telephone, to carry the voice of the people of India to the ear of the people of England. It seems to me that the Agency, under your indefatigable Secretary, Mr. William Digby (*loud cheers*), is simply invaluable in bringing India in contact with her friends in England, and in briefing those friends when they take up Indian subjects either in Parliament or before the public. Also the agency, with the Committee which supervises its working, will, we hope, be the nucleus round which an Indian party will gradually gather itself. This will be our organisation No. 3, the Indian Parliamentary Party, consisting of men who, however different their views may be on other subjects, are willing to co-operate on the basis of a just and sympathetic policy towards India. The meeting three weeks ago, at the National Liberal Club, under the presidency of our valued friend Mr. George Yule, was the first movement towards the formation of such a party. Strong sympathy was then expressed with the objects of the Congress: and it is hoped that when Parliament meets, arrangements will be made to secure joint action in matters affecting Indian interests. But, gentlemen, I have not come to the end of our list of activities on behalf of India. I rejoice to learn

that a group of Indian speakers of weight and experience are about to proceed to England, in company with our General Secretary (*loud cheers*) for the purpose of initiating a systematic propaganda by addressing popular audiences at the great centres of population throughout Great Britain. You will know well how to address those great audiences, appealing fearlessly to the highest motives, and calling on the people of England to perform their trust and duty towards the unrepresented millions of India: appeals to unselfishness, to justice, and to humanity will ever find a sure response from the great heart of the British people. (*Cheers.*)

ENGLISHMEN AND THE CONGRESS.

In conclusion, I would like to address a few words to those of our English friends who distrust the Congress movement. The promoters of the Congress profess strong attachment to British rule. And I would ask, is there any reason to doubt this profession? ("*No, no.*") Have those men any interests antagonistic to our rule? ("*No, no.*") Remember that the originators of this movement are educated men, trained up by us in a love of freedom and free institutions. Is it likely that these men should wish to exchange the rule of England, the freest and the most enlightened country in the world, for that of Russia which is one of the most barbarous and retrograde? (*Cheers.*) I remember being much struck with the remark of a native friend of mine with reference to Russian advances. He said to me: "If India is lost we are the chief losers; you can go to your ships and will be safe in your distant homes. We, on the other hand, should lose all: our country, our liberties, and our hopes for the regeneration of our race."

Perhaps some of our doubting English friends will

say, "We attach more importance to deeds than to words." I think we can point also to deeds. It is well known that in all schemes for the invasion of India the Russian Generals depend for success on a hoped-for rising of the native population. In 1885, they appear to have put this idea to the test by a pretended advance. Had this move been followed by any signs of sympathy, or even by an ominous silence of expectancy throughout India, Russia would have rejoiced, and we should have felt our position weakened. But India does not treat England's difficulty as her opportunity. On the contrary, there went up on all sides a patriotic cry, led by the native press, calling on all to join with men and money, and make common cause against the common foe. (*Cheers.*) I think also the action of the Congress, when calmly viewed, will be seen to point in the same direction. The man who points out the rocks and shoals towards which the ship is moving, is the friend of the captain, not the enemy. And that is the light in which the Government should regard the criticisms of the Congress. The moderate reforms proposed by the Congress will all tend to make the people of India more prosperous and more contented, and will thereby strengthen the foundations of British rule. (*Cheers.*) And here I would specially invite our English commercial friends to join with us in our efforts to increase the material prosperity of the country. At present, owing to the poverty of the people, the trade is nothing in comparison with what it ought to be. This is an argument which has been effectively pressed by our veteran leader, Dadabhai Naoroji. He has pointed out that our Australian colonies take English goods at the rate of £ 17 or £18 per head per annum, whereas poor India can only take at the rate of eighteen pence a head. If, by releasing him from his bonds of debt,

and placing him in a position to exercise his industry, we could make the ryot moderately prosperous, how great would be the benefit to English trade! If the Indian customer could take even £1 a head, the exports to India would exceed the exports to all the rest of the world put together. I would, therefore, say to our mercantile friends, help us to make the ryot prosperous, and your commercial business will soon increase by leaps and bounds.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

Gentlemen, I have now concluded my preliminary remarks, and I thank you for the patience with which you have heard me, and have now to invite you to attack, with good appetite, the substantial bill of fare which will be placed before you. I will not in any way anticipate your proceedings, but I may perhaps express a hope that you will give early and earnest attention to the Bill for the Reform of the Legislative Council. And in connection with this Bill, I would take the opportunity to congratulate you on the presence here to-day of a very distinguished visitor—one whose name is a synonym for independence, for strength, and for success. I think poor India is very fortunate in securing such a champion as Mr. Charles Bradlaugh (*loud and continued cheers*), a very Charles Martel of these later days, whose sledge-hammer blows have often shaken to their foundations the citadels of prejudice, of ignorance, and of oppression.

To-day there only remains to appoint, as usual, a Subjects Committee, and I will ask you to do this before we separate.

Gentlemen, I will not detain you longer, but will only express my earnest hope that your labours may prosper and that your deliberations may effectually promote "the safety, honour and welfare of Her Majesty and her dominions." (*Loud and long continued cheers, followed by a general rising and waving of handkerchiefs and a final "One cheer more!"*)

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, ALLAHABAD CONGRESS.

[*The following is the full text of the Presidential Address delivered at the Twenty-fifth Indian National Congress, held at Allahabad in* 1910:—]

Ladies and Gentlemen,—In selecting me to preside, for the second time, over your National Assembly, you have bestowed upon me a signal mark of your confidence. The honour is great; the responsibilities are also great; and I must ask from you a full measure of indulgence. At the same time, whatever my shortcomings may be, there is one respect in which I shall not be found wanting, and that is in good-will towards you and the cause you represent. My sympathy with your aspirations is whole-hearted; and I cherish an enduring faith in the future destiny of India. India deserves to be happy. And I feel confident that brighter days are not far of. There is a saying that every nation deserves its fate; and my confidence in the future of India is founded on the solid merits of the Indian people—their law-abiding character, their industry, their patient and gentle nature, their capacity for managing their own affairs, as shown in their ancient village organisation. Further I put my trust in the intelligence, the reasonableness, and the public spirit of the educated classes. And last, but not least, I have confidence in the Congress, whose pious duty it is to guide the people in their peaceful progress towards self-government within the Empire.

A few days ago, speaking at a gathering of friends in England, who commissioned me to bring you their hearty greeting, I quoted the words of my dear old friend Sir

Wilfred Lawson, who during his long life was ever engaged in some uphill battle for the cause of righteousness. He said that we should hope all things, but expect nothing. This is the spirit which defies discouragement and is beyond the reach of disappointment. During the last 20 years it has been difficult for the friends of India even to hope. Poor India has suffered pains almost beyond human endurance. We have had war, pestilence and famine, earthquake and cyclone; an afflicted people driven well-nigh to despair. But now, at last, we see a gleam of light. Hope has revived, and the time has come to close our ranks and press forward with ordered discipline. There is much arduous work to be done, but the reward will be great. In the words of the poet, let us, "march with our face to the light; put in the sickle and reap."

OUR WATCHWORDS.

Our watchwords must be "Hope"—"Conciliation"—"United Effort."

"HOPE"

The late King-Emperor, Edward the Peace-maker whose loss we shall ever deplore, in his message to the, Princes and peoples of India on the occasion of the Jubilee, gave us every ground for hope. In that gracious Declaration, which confirmed and developed the principles laid down in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, he promised concessions to the wishes of the people, including the steady obliteration of race distinctions in making appointments to high office, the extension of representative institutions, and a kindly sympathy with Indian aspirations generally. Effect was given to those promises by Lord Morley's appointment of Indians to his own Council, and to the Executive Council (the inner Cabinet) of the

Viceroy and of the Local Governments, and when he successfully carried through both Houses of Parliament his far-reaching measure of reform for the expansion of the Legislative Councils on a wider representative basis. A hopeful spirit as regards the near future is also justified by the sympathetic tone of the speeches of both the outgoing and the incoming Viceroys. India honours Lord Minto as a man who, under the most trying circumstances, has bravely and honestly striven to do his duty. According to his view, the unrest and political awakening in India is evidence that "the time has come for a further extension of representative principles in our administration." And Lord Hardinge has promised to "do his utmost to consolidate the beneficent and far-reaching scheme of reform initiated by Lord Morley and Lord Minto for the association of the people of India more closely with the management of their own affairs, and to conciliate the races, classes and creeds."

"CONCILIATION."

And this brings us to the duty of conciliation, as now the first step towards constructive work. As long as Indian leaders could only offer a criticism of official measures from outside, it was necessary that their main energies should be directed towards securing a modification of the system of administration under which they lived. And in such work it was inevitable that hard and unpleasant things should occasionally be said on either side, rendering harmonious co-operation difficult, if not impossible. But now that opportunities have been provided for popular representatives to discuss, in a serious and responsible spirit and face to face with official members, the grievances of the people which they would like to see removed or the reforms which they wish to be carried out

the dominant note of their relations with official classes, as also among themselves, should, I think, be one of conciliation and co-operation. There is an enormous amount of good, solid, useful work for the welfare of the people of India to be done in various directions, needing devoted workers, who will labour strenuously and with a genuine appreciation of one another's difficulties. Such is the work for the economic and industrial regeneration of the country, and for the development of education—elementary education for the masses, technical education, and the higher education of the West—England's greatest boon to India—the magic touch, which has awakened to new life the ancient activities of the Indian intellect. Besides these, there are other important items in the Congress programme calling loudly for early attention and settlement. All this means effort, strenuous, well-directed, and self-sacrificing: and it needs co-operation from every quarter. In facing this high enterprise, let us forget old grievances, whether of class or creed or personal feeling. Let us not dwell on matters of controversy, but cultivate a spirit of toleration; giving credit to all that, however different their methods may be, they are true lovers of Mother India and desire her welfare. If, as I trust will be the case, you accept these general principles, I will ask you briefly to consider the specific cases in which, from the nature of things, we must anticipate some difficulty in obtaining the hearty co-operation we so much desire. In so vast and composite an entity as India, there exist necessarily divergent views and divergent action in matters political and social, leading to friction. Among important classes and groups, difficulties have hitherto arisen in three principal directions: we have the differences (1) between European officials and educated Indians, (2) between

Hindus and Mahomedans, and (3) between Moderate Reformers and Extremists. Such tendencies to discord cannot be ignored. But my proposition is, that the conflict of interest is only apparent; that if we go below the surface, we find identity of object among all these classes and groups; that all are equally interested in the prosperity and happiness of India; and that the only true wisdom is for all to work together in harmony, each casting into the common treasury his own special gifts, whether of authority, or of knowledge, or of unselfish devotion.

"CONCILIATION;" (1) OFFICIALS AND NON-OFFICIALS.

Let us then consider briefly the facts regarding each of the three cases above noted, beginning with that of European officials and independent Indian opinion. In order to trace the growth of the existing tension, we cannot do better than refer to the records of the Congress, which during the last 25 years has mirrored popular feeling, and registered the pronouncements of many trusted leaders; some of whom, alas, have passed away, as Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, Mr. Justice Tyabji, Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, and Mr. Ananda Charlu; others, as the Grand Old Man of India, are still with us, to cheer us with their presence and guide us on our way. Now what was the feeling 25 years ago of the Congress leaders towards British policy and British administrators? There could not be a more sincere and uncompromising exponent of independent Indian opinion than Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, but nothing could be stronger than his repudiation of any feeling unfriendly to British policy or British methods. As President of the Second Congress in 1886, he said:—"It is under the civilizing rule of the Queen and people of England that we meet here together, hindered by none, and are freely allowed to speak our mind without the

least fear and without the least hesitation. Such a thing is possible under British rule and British rule only." He then goes on to recount some of the "great and numberless blessings which British Rule has conferred on us," and concludes as follows:—"When we have to acknowledge so many blessings as flowing from British rule,—and I could descant on them for hours, because it would be simply recounting to you the history of the British Empire in India,—is it possible that an assembly like this, every one of whose members is fully impressed with the knowledge of these blessings, could meet for any purpose inimical to that rule to which we owe so much?" Such were, not so long ago, the cordial feelings of educated Indians towards British policy and British administrators. A change of policy produced a change of sentiment. The various measures which caused this sad estrangement are well known; and I will not now recapitulate them, because I am above all things anxious that by-gones should be by-gones. Happily, also, the introduction of the reforms of Lord Morley and Lord Minto has done a good deal to mitigate existing bitterness. Conciliation on the part of the Government has already produced some effect, but it has not been carried far enough to bear full fruit. With a view, therefore, to restore old friendly relations, I will venture to make a two-fold appeal to the official class; first, to accept and work the new policy represented by the reforms in an ungrudging, even, generous spirit, and to carry it further, especially, in the field of local self-government—in the district, the taluka and the village; and, secondly, to facilitate a return of the country to a normal condition by an early repeal of repressive measures or, in any case, by dispensing, as far as possible, with the exercise of the extraordinary powers which they have con-

ferred on the executive, and by making it easy for those who have seen the error of their ways to go back quietly to the path of law and order. Any fresh offences must, of course, be dealt with, but moderate men would have a chance of working effectively for peace, if the public mind was not kept in a state of tension by indiscriminate house-searchings, prosecutions and other processes in pursuit of offences of an older date. There is a saying that it takes two to make a quarrel. May I, therefore, at the same time make an appeal to Indian publicists, in the interest of their own people, to facilitate forbearance on the part of the authorities by realising the difficulties of the administration and by avoiding the use of language, which rouses official suspicion and gives rise to vague apprehension? In this way both parties would make their contribution to peace and goodwill.

As an old Civilian, and as belonging to a family long connected with India, I appreciate the merits of the Indian Civil Service, and believe that there never existed a body of officials more hard-working and trustworthy. But the time has come for a modification of the system. The guardian, if somewhat austere, has been honest and well-meaning; but the ward has now reached an age at which he is entitled to a substantial share in the management of his own affairs. Is it not the part of wisdom to accord this to him with a good grace? During the last few years, official duties, connected with repression, have been carried out with characteristic thoroughness; severe punishments have been awarded and such advantages as could possibly accrue to law and order from this policy have been realised. But the performances of such duties must have been irksome and uncongenial to the British temperament. All, therefore, will be glad of a truce in

those proceedings. It is now the turn of concilation, which will give encouragement to the great body of well-affected citizens, whose hopes are blighted by disorder, and whose dearest wish is to bring back peace to a troubled land. This policy is both the wisest and the most congenial. I am sure, and I speak from personal experience, the Civilian will find his life pleasanter, and his burdens lighter, if he will frankly accept the co-operation which educated Indians are not only willing but anxious to afford. This was the view taken by Sir Bartle Frere who said:—"Wherever I go, I find the best exponents of the policy of the English Government and the most able co-adjutors in adjusting that policy to the peculiarities of the natives of India among the ranks of the educated Indians." But apart from the satisfaction, and personal comfort of working in harmony with his surroundings, the young Civilian naturally craves for a high ideal in the career he has chosen; and he cannot but feel a glow of sympathy for the views of the older generation of administrators—Elphinstone and Malcolm, Munro and Macaulay—who foresaw with gladness the day of India's emancipation. Every profession needs its ideal. Without that, it is but a sordid struggle for livelihood; and every man of a generous spirit, who puts his hand to the Indian plough, must regard the present discord as but a temporary phase, and look forward to the time when all will work together to rescue the masses from ignorance, famine and disease, and to restore India to her ancient greatness.

"CONCILIATION:" (2) HINDUS AND MAHOMEDANS.

We come next to the case of the Hindus and Mahomedans. This is a domestic question, and it is doubtful how far an outsider can usefully intervene. But I will venture to say a few words on the subject, because I feel

so strongly the danger to peace and progress, if these two great communities come to be arrayed in two hostile camps. Also in the position I now occupy as your President, I feel to a certain extent justified in my intervention, because one of the principle objects of the Congress, as declared by Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee at the opening of the first Congress in 1855, was "the eradication, by direct friendly personal intercourse, of all possible race, creed or provincial prejudices among all lovers of our country." Fortified by these considerations, I approached the subject, before leaving England, in consultation with esteemed Indian friends who were anxious to promote conciliation; and I am glad to say that hopeful beginning has been made. His Highness the Aga Khan, in agreement with Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and Mr. Ameer Ali, has proposed a Conference, where the leaders of both parties may meet, with a view to a friendly settlement of differences; and at their request, I addressed a letter to some of the leading representatives of the various communities in different parts of India, explaining the proposals and inviting their co-operation. In this connection we may refer to the words of our lamented friend, Mr. Justice Tyabji, who presided over the third Congress at Madras. He recognised that each of the great Indian communities has its own peculiar social, educational and economic problems to solve. "But," he said, "so far as general political questions affecting the whole of India—such as those which alone are discussed by this Congress—are concerned, I, for one, am utterly at a loss to understand why Mahomedans should not work shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-countrymen of other races and creeds for the common benefit of all." This pronouncement seems to place the whole question in its true light. This also is the view

taken by Mr. Wilfred Blunt than whom there is no truer friend of Islam. He urges the Mahomedan community to join the Congress movement, "if they would share the full advantages of the coming self-government of their country." Mr. R. M. Sayani, a Mahomedan gentleman of wide experience, who was your President in 1896, carefully analysed the facts of the case, tracing the historical origin of the friction between Hindus and Mahomedans, and at the same time indicating the influences which make for conciliation. No doubt certain recent events have brought into prominence the differences between the two communities; but these differences should not be exaggerated, and we should rather direct our attention to the solid interests in which all Indians are equally concerned. I would, therefore, commend to the special attention of both Hindus and Mahomedans the facts and arguments contained in Mr. Sayani's presidential address, which will be found at pages 319 to 346 of the handy volume, entitled "The Indian National Congress," which we owe to the public spirit of our friend, Mr. G. A. Natesan of Madras.

A recognition by the two great communities of the essential identity of their real interests, however long it may be delayed, is, I feel convinced, bound to come at last. Meanwhile, as practical men, it behoves us to hasten the consummation by utilising every opportunity that presents itself to promote joint action as also by avoiding, as far as possible, those occasions or controversies which led to friction. A good illustration of what may be achieved by the Hindus and Mahomedans standing shoulder to shoulder in the service of India is supplied by the latest news from South Africa. Here, if anywhere, the Indian cause appeared to have arrayed against its overwhelming odds. But thanks to the determined stand made by the

Indian community under the splendid generalship of Mr. Gandhi, the long night seems to be drawing to a close and we already see the faint glimmerings of a new dawn. There is no doubt that the manner in which the people of India, without distinction of race or creed, have come forward to support their suffering brethren in the Transvaal, has made an impression on both the Imperial and the South African Governments. In the new Councils, too, members of the two communities have excellent opportunities of working together for the common good, and much may be achieved by them in matters like the education of the masses, higher and technical education, and the economic and industrial development of the country. Such co-operation, besides producing substantial results directly, will also have the indirect effect of strengthening those tendencies which make for joint action in public affairs generally.

"CONCILIATION:" (3) MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS.

Lastly, we have to consider the differences which have arisen among Indian reformers themselves, between those who are known as "Moderates" and those who are called "Extremists." In 1885, when Mr. Allan Hume, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee founded the Indian National Congress on strictly constitutional lines, there were no differences: for more than 20 years from that date all Indian reformers worked together harmoniously, and, year by year, patiently and respectfully placed before the Government of India a reasoned statement of popular needs. But in 1907, at Surat, there was a split in the Congress. The more impatient spirits, despairing of success by Congress methods, broke away from their former leaders, and sought salvation in other directions, and by other methods. Now, as a mere matter of

tactics and expediency, to put it no higher, I would ask, have those other methods been successful ? It appears to me that they have resulted in wholesale prosecutions and much personal suffering, without tangible benefit to the popular cause. On the contrary, all departures from constitutional methods have weakened the hands of sympathisers in England, while furnishing to opponents a case for legislation against the Press and public meeting, and an excuse for drawing from its rusty sheath the obsolete weapon of deportation without trial. I should like to put another question, and it is this : If now the tide of reaction has been stayed, and if, in any respect, we have had the beginning of better things, is not this mainly due to the labours of the Congress ? I do not wish unduly to magnify Congress results. But what other effective organisation exists, either in India or in England, working for Indian political reform ? For a quarter of a century the Congress has been at work, openly and fearlessly, without haste and without rest, educating public opinion, and, at the close of each year, pressing upon the Government a well-considered programme of reforms. It would be a reflection on the intelligence of the Government to suppose that such a practical expression of popular wishes was without its effect. And, as a matter of fact, Lord Morley's beneficent measures have followed Congress lines, the reform and expansion of Legislative Councils having been the leading Congress proposal from the very first session in 1885. I would, therefore, submit to our "impatient idealists" that there is no cause for despair as regards Congress methods, and I would ask them not to play into the hands of our opponents by discrediting the results of Congress work. Advanced reformers should not preach the doctrine of discouragement, but rather carry the flag

boldly forward, as the scouts and Uhlans of the army of progress. We have heard something about "mendicancy" in connection with petitions to Parliament and the higher authorities. But Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, as President at Calcutta in 1906, pointed out that "these petitions are not any begging for any favours any more than the conventional 'your obedient servant' in letters makes a man an obedient servant. It is the conventional way of approaching higher authorities. The petitions are claims for rights or for justice or for reforms,—to influence and put pressure on Parliament by showing how the public regard any particular matter." Assuredly the authors of the Petition of Right were not mendicants. On the contrary, they were the strong men of the 17th century, who secured to the people of England the liberties they now enjoy. In following this historical method, therefore, there is nothing to hurt the self-respect of the Indian people.

I sincerely hope that those who have broken from the Congress, because they have ceased to believe in Congress methods and in constitutional agitation, will consider dispassionately what I have said above and revert to their older faith. But in addition to such men, there is, I understand, a considerable number of old Congressmen, whose attachment to Congress principles is intact, but who are not now to be found in the ranks of the Congress, because they are not satisfied about the necessity of the steps taken by the leaders of the constitutional party, after the unhappy split at Surat, to preserve the Congress from extinction. These friends of ours obviously stand on a different footing from those who profess Extremist views, and I would venture to appeal to their patriotism and ask them not to be over-critical in their judgment on a situa-

tion, admitted by everybody to be extraordinary, which could only be met by extraordinary measures. I would at the same time appeal to you, gentlemen of the Congress, to consider if you cannot, without compromising the principles for which you stand, make it in some way easier for those old colleagues of yours to return to the fold. Remember that the interests at stake are of the highest importance, and no attempt that can reasonably be made to close your divisions ought to be spared.

"UNITED EFFORT."

We now come to a very practical part of our business. Supposing we obtain agreement on the principles above indicated and secure co-operation among the forces of progress, in what directions can our efforts be most usefully exerted? Hitherto Congress work has come mostly under three headings: I. Constructive work in India, educating and organising public opinion; II. Representations to the Government of India regarding proposed reforms; and III. Propaganda in England. The expansion of Legislative Councils and the admission of Indians into the Executive Councils of the Viceroy and Local Governments has vastly extended the scope of the work under the 1st heading. Independent Indians will now be in a position to take the initiative in many important matters, and press forward reforms, which hitherto have only been the subject of representations to the Government. In order to promote co-ordination and united action in this most important work, might I suggest that, in consultation with independent members of the Legislative Councils, the Congress might draw up a programme of the reform measures most desired, for which, in their opinion, the country is ripe, and on which they think the members should concentrate till success has been attained? As regards the 2nd heading,

no doubt the Congress Resolutions will, as usual, be forwarded to the Government of India and the Secretary of State. But it would, I think, be desirable to bring your views specially to the notice of His Excellency the Viceroy. This migbt be done by a Deputation presenting a short address, showing the measures to which the Congress attaches the most immediate importance. Among these might be included such matters as the separation of the Executive and Judicial, the reduction of military expenditure, larger grants for education, and the economic village inquiry asked for by the Indian Famine Union. It would be very useful to know the general views on such topics held by the head of the Government, and the sympathetic replies, given by Lord Hardinge to addresses from other public bodies, makes it certain that we should receive a courteous hearing. In our representation we might include a petition for an amnesty or a remission of sentences to political offenders, as also a prayer for a relaxation of the repressive legislation of the last few years. Personally I should also like to ask for a modification of the Bengal Partition. But at the present moment, on the first arrival of a new Viceroy, such a move would, in my opinion, not be judicious. I have always held that this most unhappy mistake must ultimately be rectified; a modification will be made more practicable for the Government, if, in friendly conference, all those concerned can come to an agreement on the subject, and satisfy the Government that the best administrative arrangement would be a Governor-in-Council for the whole of the old Bengal Lieut-Governorship, with Chief Commissioners under him for the component provinces.

PROPAGANDA IN ENGLAND.

There remains the 3rd heading, Propaganda in

England. Will you bear with me when I say that you never seem sufficiently to realise the necessity of this work, the supreme importance of making the British people understand the needs of India, and securing for your cause the support of this all powerful ally. I pressed this upon you in 1889, when I came with Mr. Bradlaugh, and again in 1904 with Sir Henry Cotton. Once more, in 1910, I entreat you to give your attention to this vital matter. Let me remind you of the twofold character of the Congress work. There is first the work in India : the political education of the people, having for its object to create solidarity of Indian public opinion, founded on the widest experience and the wisest Counsels available. This part of the work has been in great measure accomplished. During the last 25 years the Congress programme, stated in the form of definite resolutions, has been gradually matured, and is now practically accepted as expressing independent public opinion throughout India. The Congress Resolutions contain the case for India, the brief for the appellant is complete ; and what is now wanted is a vigorous propaganda in England, in order to bring the appeal effectively before the High Court of the British Nation. The whole to be done is of a missionary kind, and must be mainly directed to influencing the British people, in whom the ultimate power is vested ; and any one who on behalf of India, has been in the habit of addressing large audiences in England, and especially audiences of working men and women, can bear testimony to the ready sympathy shown by the hearers, and their manifest desire that justice should be done. It must be borne in mind that in England public opinion guides the Parliamentary electors ; the votes of the electors decide what manner of men shall compose the majority in the House of Commons ;

the majority in the House of Commons places in power the Government of which it approves; and the Government appoints the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, who, between them, exercise the supreme power at Whitehall and Calcutta. If Indians are wise, they will keep these facts in view and follow the line of least resistance. Instead of knocking their heads against a stonewall, they should take the key which lies within their grasp. Those of the older generation will remember what striking success attended the labours of Messrs Mano Mohan Ghose, Chadavarkar and Mudaliar, when they came to England in 1885. And only those who understand the true inwardness of things can realise what India owes to men like Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, Mr. Lal Mohan Ghose, Mr. A. M. Bose, Mr. Surendranath Banerjee, Mr. Wacha, Mr. Mudholkar and Mr. Gokhale, for the work they have done in England, by addressing public meetings, and by personal interviews with influential statesmen. But the visits of these gentlemen have been at long intervals. What is wanted is a systematic, continuous, and sustained effort, to bring before the English public the Indian view of Indian affairs.

In India, there is a new-born spirit of self-reliance. That is good; but do not let it degenerate into dislike for the people of other lands. Race-prejudice is the palladium of your opponents. Do not let any such feelings hinder you from cultivating brotherhood with friends of freedom all over the world, and especially in England. It is only by the goodwill of the British people that India can attain what is the best attainable future—the "United States of India" under the ægis of the British Empire, a step towards the poet's ideal of a Federation of the world

In his eager desire for Self-Government, let not the "impatient idealist" forget the solid advantages of being a member of the British Empire; the *Pax Britannica* within India's borders; the protection from foreign aggression by sea and land; the partnership with the freest and most progressive nation of the world. No one supposes that under present conditions India could stand alone. She possesses all the materials for Self-Government; an ancient civilisation; reverence for authority; an industrious and law-abiding population; abundant intelligence among the ruling classes. But she lacks training and organisation. A period of apprenticeship is necessary, but that period need not be very long, if the leaders of the people set themselves to work together in harmony. Hand in hand with the British people, India can most safely take her first steps on the new path of progress.

PART II. SPEECHES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SIMULTANEOUS EXAMINATIONS.

[*The following speech was delivered by Sir William Wedderburn in the House of Commons, on June 2, 1893, in seconding Mr. H. W. Paul's motion for the introduction of a system of Simultaneous Examination in England and India for the Indian Civil Service*:—]

I concur in the view my hon. friend has taken, and I consider that the refusal to hold simultaneous examinations, and so put the Indian and the Englishman upon an equal footing, is a breach of faith; is also disobedience of the clear instruction of this House; and is a policy tending to inefficiency and want of economy. I have listened with much interest to what was said by the Under-Secretary of State for India. He spoke somewhat slightingly of those independent members who have visited India in order to obtain an unprejudiced view of Indian questions, and who, I believe, even in a few months in India often gain a better knowledge and more unprejudiced understanding of questions than men who have passed many years in that country if they have got professional interests to serve. I agree with my honourable friend that the independent member is a very good judge of Indian questions, and I ask for no better judge: but I would rather that that judge had not lived in the atmosphere of the India Office, as the Under-Secretary of State for India himself does. From what he has said, he appears to me to come before

the House saturated with the opinions and coloured by the atmosphere of the India Office and his official position. Now the views that he has placed before the House, the objections he has taken, are two-fold. He stated a few days ago, in answer to my hon. friend the member for Finsbury, that there were two principal objections to simultaneous examinations. The first was that they would sacrifice the principle of obtaining the best and highest form of English education. I think on behalf of my Scotch and Irish friends we may object to English education only being referred to. (*Hear, hear.*) But apart from that, I think it quite unworthy of the Government to call such a mere detail a matter of principle. The real principle that is being sacrificed now is the principle of absolute impartiality among all Her Majesty's subjects. (*Hear, hear.*) That is a principle worthy of preservation. The other reason my hon. friend has given is that by recent arrangements ample provision has been made for the employment of the natives of India in the service. I offer to that allegation a most absolute and complete denial. Now this question may be thought to be only one of employment in the Public Service, and that it is not a very extensive one; but hon. members will remember that in India a despotic Government absorbs all the independent professions, and admission to the Public Service is really admission to the liberal professions in India. Therefore, upon our giving to the natives of India a fair share of the higher offices depends the complexion of the governing body in India—whether the people of India are to be under an official autocracy absolutely alien to themselves in race, language, and sentiment, or whether Parliament will place them in a happier category, like those of Russia, where at any rate they are only dominated and oppressed

by their own countrymen. (*Hear, hear.*) I say this is a highly important matter. The question is also important for this reason. If we look at the history of this controversy we shall see it is an example of the habitual disobedience of the Anglo-Indian Government to the principles laid down by Parliament and the Crown. The Under-Secretary of State has laid that there might be circumstances under which the principle of absolute impartiality could not be carried out. Under the Act of 1833 it was stated that there was to be no difference made on account of race or of religion. In the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 it was again repeated that there was to be no distinction in race or of creed. Now, in order to be quite clear, I should like to know if my hon. friend the Under-Secretary of State is prepared to repeal the Act of 1833, as Lord Lytton proposed in 1878, and to issue a proclamation stating that impartiality shall be carried out only when it suits the Indian bureaucracy? The present state of things as regards high appointments is that the great bulk of the appointments are gained by competition, and we all know that the object of the change was to get rid of jobbery. In accordance with these declarations of impartiality we say that all subjects of Her Majesty should be placed on an equal footing, and this cannot be done so long as the examinations are held in London only. To hold the examinations only in London is practically to exclude all natives of India. Not very long ago that was admitted by Lord Kimberley, who added that by this arrangement the higher branches of the service—the covenanted service—are practically barred to the natives of India. I say, therefore, that the impartiality has not been carried out by the Indian Government—that impartiality which was intended by this House when those declarations were

made, and when competition was instituted so that the best men should get the appointment whatever it be. (*Hear, hear.*) Now we come to the second point in the speech of my hon. friend the Under-Secretary of State for India. He said that ample facilities have been given by these arrangements for allowing the natives of India to attain to the higher offices. Now, with the indulgence of the House, I wish very briefly to recapitulate what has been done in this matter and I leave the House to judge how far my honourable friend's statement is correct. After it was found that the natives of India were not able to get into the service by competition it was decided to add some fresh measure, as was pointed out by my hon. friend the member for Finsbury (Mr. D. Naoroji), to admit them in some other way. In some particular cases experienced Indian officials who had reached the highest offices that they could attain and whom the Government were anxious to appoint to higher office, were not legally eligible. So in 1870 an Act was passed to enable the Government of India to appoint natives to any office whatever, but unfortunately that Act was made permissive and the duty of making the rules and appointing these natives was given to the very men who were their rivals in the service, whose interest it was to exclude them. (*Hear, hear.*) This made the Act no concession at all for it gave the Simla clique additional means of putting their own friends into good appointments. It was as if Dublin Castle was given leave and permission to appoint the Nationalist members to any appointment they might think fit. (*Laughter and "hear, hear."*) When Parliament passed this Act of 1870, the bureaucracy of India waited nine years before they made any rules at all, and then they made rules which entirely perverted the purpose of the Act, and which

enabled them to give away to their favourites the good things of the Covenanted Service. This was called the Statutory Civil Service, and was a return to the old system of favouritism and jobbery. (*Cries of* " *Oh* ! *oh* ! ".) I am sorry to say it is true, for I have seen this with my own eyes for many years. (*Hear, hear.*) I am not speaking against individuals but against the system. It was, I assert, the habitual practice of the Government to reward their own supporters and favourites in this way with appointments, and to make these very valuable appointments a means of corrupting and undermining the independence of the native community. (*Cries of* " *Oh* ! *oh* !") I know this to be the fact because I was in the Government myself. It used to be said in the old days that an appointment in the Civil Service in India was worth £10,000, and naturally all natives of position were on the look out to get such valuable appointments for their sons and other relations. This system had also the bad effect of discrediting the natives, because the Government put in incapable friends of their own, and then they pointed to these failures as due to the appointments of natives. In this way they killed two birds with one stone. (*Hear, hear.*) That was, I think, just what we should have expected from these men, because their professional interest went in direct antagonism to the natives and the class whom it was their duty to appoint. As time went on, some further steps were found to be necessary, and he whom we regard as the best and wisest of Indian Viceroys —the Marquis of Ripon—(*Opposition laughter and Ministerial cheers*)—appointed a Public Service Commission, having for its object, not the restriction but the increase of the privileges and advantages of the natives of India as regards the higher appointments in the public

service. The object of that Commission was to improve their position. And what is the result? This provincial service, to which my hon. friend has made reference, was formed; but instead of elevating the position of the natives it restricted and oppressed them. (*Hear, hear.*) The natives of India had previously had access to over two hundred appointments; but after the introduction of this Provincial Service the natives were restricted to a certain number of lower class appointments in the Provincial Service. The appointments in the Provincial Service only amounted to about 180 as compared with 227 open to the natives before. That is the way the Public Service Commission performed their duty of extending the prospects of the natives. (*Hear, hear.*) Although we may disapprove of the Statutory Service, at any rate it had the one merit that it gave an opportunity to the natives to attain to the highest office. We prefer that the natives of India, like the men at home, should come in by the front door—by competition, but the Statutory Service opened a back door to them. Now the Provincial Service has closed even that back door, and let them in not to the higher Service but only to a small number of the lower appointments. Anyone, therefore, who has considered these points will see that the principle laid down by Parliament and the Crown has not been carried out with impartiality—(*hear, hear*)—and that the recent arrangements instead of giving ample facilities have, in point of fact, reduced even the petty advantages which the natives had before in the share of the government of their own country. It has been said that a certain number of Europeans in the higher offices are necessary to the government of India. No Indian denies that; but they say, "Do not exclude the people of the country entirely."

If a certain number of Europeans are required let arrangements be made accordingly. Perhaps it would be a good thing to have a certain maximum annual allotment for salaries to Europeans, all other offices being given to the natives of the country. (*Hear, hear.*) I would appeal to this House and to this Liberal Government to enforce these great principles which have been laid down distinctly in Acts of Parliament and in declarations of the Crown; and not to trust to the Government of India, which is really a clique of officials whose interests are directly adverse to the interests of those Indians who desire appointments. The official bureaucracy is practically uncontrolled. This whole case is a warning in regard to permissive legislation. (*Hear, hear.*) We ought not to allow this permissive legislation. The Government of India say, " Do not order us to do a definite thing, but trust us to do your wishes." This is the regular " Confidence trick". (*Hear, hear, and laughter.*) We know that the great object of the bureaucracy in India is to evade and to avoid carrying out those orders. After being in the official clique at Simla the heads of that bureaucracy come here to Westminster and belong to the Indian Council which gives the whole tone and colour to the politics of the India Office. (*Hear, hear.*) My hon. friend the Under-Secretary becomes thus involuntarily merely the mouthpiece of the official classes and of official interests. (*Cheers.*)

THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA.

[*On the motion to go into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts, on the 20th September*, 1893, *Mr. A. C. Morton moved the following amendment*: " *That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that all Indian officials should be allowed an appeal to the Home Government without regard being had to the amount of their salary.*"]

Sir W. Wedderburn said :—I desire to speak in support of the prayer of my hon. friend the member for Central Finsbury, for an independent enquiry into the condition of the people of India ; and I wish to bear personal testimony to the deplorable condition of the masses of that people. I wish to lay before this House some facts which I think will show that the cause of that deplorable condition is the system of official administration which now exists in India. (*Hear, hear.*) I do not wish to say anything against any individual or any class, but I am firmly convinced that this official system is the direct cause of the present condition of the people. Not only is it the cause, but I cannot see how it could be otherwise, because, practically, we have now in India an administration in which the people have no voice at all in the management of their affairs. (*Hear, hear.*) We have an official class who have absolute authority ; who are practically uncontrolled ; whose professional interests in many important respects are directly adverse to the interests of the great body of the people. I say that the people have no voice in the management of their own affairs, and practically there is no means of obtaining redress when

they are in official disfavour. And what do we ask? We ask simply for independent enquiry in order to learn the true state, and in order to do justice. Some hon. members, I believe, will say that there is danger or inconvenience in such an enquiry, but I say the danger consists in the refusal to make such enquiry. (*Cheers.*) There is no people more loyal, more law-abiding, or more docile, than the people of India; but the one thing which may drive them to despair is the fear that an enquiry into their grievances may be refused. (*Hear, hear.*) I would like to speak with regard to the condition of the masses of the people of India. I am glad to say that my hon. and gallant friend the member for Oxford (General Sir G. Chesney) admits that the condition of the agricultural population of India is not at all satisfactory. That agricultural population includes about nine-tenths of the whole population of India. It is a peasantry not unlike peasantry of Ireland, and the great part of India is in the condition which in Ireland is known as the congested districts. (*Hear, hear.*) In this inquiry I have great hopes of obtaining the sympathy and support of the Nationalist members for Ireland. (*Nationalist cheers.*) They know what their own countrymen in similar conditions have suffered. The iron has entered into their soul and I think they will be very sympathetic to my hon. friend Mr. Naoroji in his endeavour to bring the case of his countrymen before this House. (*Hear, hear.*) He has worked very hard and grown grey in the service of his country, he speaks with difficulty in a foreign tongue, and I think this House will be very anxious to understand the case that he wishes to make out on behalf of his unfortunate countrymen. (*Cheers.*) It has been said by one hon. member that my friend is a foreigner and a Parsee. I

think the hon. member is a little mistaken when he says that the Parsees depend for their position upon the existence of the British Government. They have been there for many hundred years, and it might as well be said that the Nationalist members are not representative of Ireland because perhaps their ancestors went over with Strongbow. (*Laughter and "Hear, hear."*) The Parsees have been nearly a thousand years established amongst the people of India and are to all intents and purposes true inhabitants of the country, but the value of what a man has to say should be valued not by his race but by the confidence which he enjoys amongst the people and amongst his fellow-countrymen. The hon. member for Finsbury enjoys the confidence of the great body of his fellow-countrymen, and that has been expressed again and again in every way in which the people can express their opinions. (*Hear, hear.*) With regard to the question of class prejudice, I shall have something to say. If the official records are correct—and I have no reason to doubt them—it would appear, it has been stated, that one-fifth of the population are rarely able to enjoy more than one meal in the day. That means that one-fifth of the population—say 40,000,000 of people, as many as the whole population of these islands—go through their lives without having their hunger satisfied. What did the hon. member for Camberwell (Mr. Bayley) yesterday state what the average income of the native of India is ? That is not a very large income to tax, yet the taxation that is placed upon them is nearly twice in proportion to this the richest country in the world. And, to give an example, there is a terrible salt tax, which is at the rate of about two thousand per cent. the cost of production. That is a very cruel tax, because they are vegetarians, and the poor man must have his pinch of salt

Therefore this tax falls as a cruel one upon the very poorest class of the population. (*Hear, hear.*) I do not wish to trouble the House with figures, but I can speak from what I have seen with my own eyes of the condition of the great body of their peasantry. As a matter of fact, they live so completely on the very verge of ruin that one failure of rain, one bad crop, is sufficient to cause wide-spread starvation. They have absolutely no savings ; they can save nothing because the greater part of the peasantry is hopelessly in debt. The consequence is that in one bad harvest they die, not in hundreds, not in thousands, nor tens of thousands, nor hundreds of thousands. In the famine of Bombay and Madras there were reported to have died 5,000,000 of persons, men, women, and children, industrious, frugal peasantry. I say that that fact proves that the people are in a most desperate condition ; and my belief is that the land has become exhausted, and that instead of things getting better they are going from bad to worse. I say that that condition of things is directly produced by the system of government by officials in India. My hon. and gallant friend (Sir G. Chesney) referred to me personally in a very flattering way, and I will not enter into any reference of the personal views I take because I consider that unimportant. But I would only say that I have the honour of the service as much at heart as anyone, and I may say that since the beginning of the century my family have served the Queen in India, and my wish is not to say a word against the service but to place it in the proper position : they are not to be the masters and tyrants of the public, but to be the servants of the public, and work for their interests. (*Hear, hear.*) Therefore I do not wish to come forward to impeach the service or individuals. I say that our government in India

is an administration through the officials, by the officials, and for the officials, and that in many important respects their professional interest is directly antagonistic to the interests of the great body of the people. It is high credit to them that in spite of this they have in a great measure worked with self-sacrifice for the good of the people. Yet, at the same time, I say that the system is a bad one which puts into antagonism such opposite interests. It is easy to know how much their professional interests are antagonistic to the welfare of the people. We know that in this country and elsewhere the great reforms we want for the people are peace, retrencehment, and reform. That is the basis for the welfare of the people. Now, with regard to the great official and military service, their professional interests are directly antagonistic to all three. ("*No, no*" and "*Hear, hear*".) The greatest military longing is for active service. We do not blame the army for desiring to distinguish themselves, but I do not think it will be denied that the interests of the army are opposed to peace. ("*No, no.*") At any rate their aim is to distinguish themselves in every possible way. Then there come the departments. How can they be expected to regard with favour reforms which mean the destruction of themselves. With regard to reform, how can we expect them to take the initiative in acts of reform which mean putting a limit and control on their own arbitrary powers? Reform also means, as my friend the hon. member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) has said, more power for the people of the country. And the employment for high offices of the people of the country is directly opposed to the ruling classes, who naturally wish to keep those appointments for themselves. I admit a great deal has been done in the way of giving employment to the people of India, and so far it is credit-

able that it has been done ; but the interest of the dominant class is adverse to those over whom they rule. We know perfectly well that in this country the experience in this House of the last few days would show how difficult it is for this House of Commons, sitting in London, to control the great spending departments of this country, to prevent extravagance, and to prevent waste. But here the taxpayer is the master, and yet the taxpayer as master acting through the House finds it very difficult to control waste and extravagance. What is to be expected when the condition of affairs is exactly reversed, when instead of the taxpayer being the master it is the tax-consumer who is to be the master ? He settles how much is to be paid, he fixes practically his own salary ; and what is to be expected when he is absolute and uncontrolled master, when the only duty of the taxpayer is to pay his taxes—what can you expect as regards anything like a reasonable administration of public affairs ? We can see what the result is. I trouble the House with one single figure with regard to that, namely, the increase in the civil and military expenditure of India during the last ten years. During the last ten years the civil and military expenditure of India has increased by £10,000,000, while the civil and military expenditure of this country has increased £2,500,000.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer signified dissent at these figures.

Sir William Wedderburn : The Chancellor of the Exchequer shakes his head. Perhaps he will kindly tell me what the figure is if it is not £10,000,000. According to the figures as far as my limited capacity of examining figures goes, making a comparison of the same class of expenditure I make out the Indian expenditure has increased by four times what the British expenditure has

increased. If I am asked why is that increase, the answer is an easy one, namely, because in the case of the British Exchequer we are spending our own money, and in the case of the Indian Exchequer we are spending somebody else's money, I do not know any other reason why the expenditure has mounted up in the degree it has done. Then, Mr. Speaker, I say that the whole class of officials are not so impartial in these great questions that the public and the House should leave to them absolute and uncontrolled management of the finances of India. As a matter of fact we know that these affairs are of a very urgent character. We know the Government are told that unless a certain remedy—what I would call a quack remedy for closing mints—unless that remedy is adopted there will be very great difficulty for paying current expenses. That remedy has been adopted; and even in that remedy there is a taint of the selfishness I deprecate so much from the ruling powers, namely that its direct effect is to raise the exchange and the value of the rupee, and in that direction the personal and pecuniary interest of every official in India is more or less involved. I do not wish to lay great stress on that matter, but I wish to say that the Government of India is in very great straits. The people are taxed up to the utmost limit that the people can bear taxation, they do not know where to turn, and I say that under these conditions it is the absolute duty of this House to cause independent inquiry to be made by those whom they trust. I do not ask the House to take our statements for gospel. I say I have seen pretty well the inner workings of the Government and I approve of them. As far as the voice of a single individual will go, I ask for an inquiry. I say that if reasonable inquiry were made then it would establish entirely the points we now

ask to be inquired into. I now return just for a moment to the question of the official Government of India. It is not only that the officials generally have interests adverse to the people of India, but that the Government does not rest with the rank and file at all; it rests with cliques, with official cliques at headquarters; they are the people who are the real authority in India, those who hold the very high position at the head of very great departments. My proposition is that it is impossible for anyone in the Government service out in India to reach these high positions if they hold independent convictions, if they are not willing to tell unpleasant truths to the authorities, there is not the least chance of their ever reaching those high positions. I take an illustration that will make that clear to everyone. We have Viceroys of very different complexions. At one time it is a Viceroy like Lord Lytton, whose high ability commends itself to gentlemen opposite. At another time we have a Viceroy like the Marquess of Ripon, who recommends himself to persons on this side of the House. It is quite evident that any man in the Government service who holds a calm conviction either in favour of Lord Ripon's policy or against it, could only expect promotion when the party was in power which he approved of, therefore the one side would get a step when Lord Ripon was in power, and the other side would get a step when the other side was in power. But the gentleman who carries out orders of any sort gets two steps to one by the other man, the men who walk up the ladder of promotion two steps at a time are the gentlemen who are not weighted with those painful convictions which force them to tell Governments unpleasant truths. But those men who get up can prophecy smooth things, and are considered right men for ministers and things of that sort.

It always reminds me of a great historical character, Doeg the Edomite. The king of Israel told his servants, to slay the priests, and when his servants refused, Doeg came forward and slaughtered them very readily. He is the man to get rapid promotion without any seniority of service. (*Hear, hear, and laughter*). Therefore the Government of India is really the Government of a clique. How are they to be controlled? It is said they are to be controlled from the India Office, but I say that control is absolutely fallacious, because it consists of Her Majesty's Secretary of State—who perhaps is in office for six months—surrounded by twelve or fifteen members of that very clique against whom the complaints are made. It is said that when a good American dies he goes to Paris, and when a good official dies he goes to the Indian Council, and there he sits. (*Hear, hear, and laughter.*) It is quite impossible that they should get the energy; and I say that in some cases there is practically no redress for any wrong that may be done or any wrong that it may be thought is about to be committed. The stereotyped answer which we get to questions in the House about matters the details of which are perhaps buried in the India Office, is always that "the Secretary of State sees no reason to interfere." That is the stereotyped answer, and nobody can get redress if treated unjustly in India. My gallant friend who has just left the House challenged me to mention any case in which the party which I favour—what is called the International Congress party—had brought forward and promoted any practical scheme for the good of the people. He challenged me to state that. We approve of the Indian National Congress because it is the best expression that can at present be given of the public opinion of India. If anyone will suggest a better way of getting at the public

opinion of India we shall be very glad to adopt it. The members of the Congress are all collected in open meeting; they are sent there from long distances; they assemble there in debate and discussion, and resolutions passed, which are circulated among the members of this House. I think that my hon. friend hardly gave a fair description of the nature of the results attained there. But I will give an instance. As has been said, the Indian cultivator is in a desperate condition of poverty and debt. The reason that he has fallen into this state of debt to the Indian money-lender is on account of the extreme severity with which the revenue is levied on the Indian cultivator. The other reason is because there have been established civil courts which force them into the power of the money-lenders, so that they are practically made insolvent. That is a state of things of a most serious kind. The peasantry are being sold up by the money-lenders all over the country, and are being divorced from the land. Those who think with me devised this remedy, that there should be a composition between these people and the money-lenders and that there should be established agricultural banks, such as we find in every country where there are peasant, interests, in order to furnish a fund at reasonable rates of interest, and so help them out of their difficulty. This is a scheme which was accepted by both the natives and the money-lenders. It was approved by the Government of Bombay. It was accepted by the Government of India, and Lord Cromer, who was then Financial Minister, was willing to advance funds necessary to start this composition. The Government of India wrote home to the India Office, recommending that a very small experiment should be tried in one or two villages, so that the practical outcome of the scheme might be witnessed. If we could

have found out a way of making one village prosperous and contented, we had the clue to making the whole of India prosperous and contented (*Hear, hear.*) Well, sir, it is very difficult for any person to understand why such an experiment, approved of by all classes of people, approved by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and other public bodies, I say it is almost incredible that anybody should be found to object to such an experiment being tried. We have been working at this matter for ten years. We had Government assent to carry it out. But when this scheme entered the portals of the India Office it never left them alive. It was stabbed in the dark, and to this day I do not know why the Government of India, the Viceroy and Council were forbidden to try this limited experiment, by which we might have found the means of restoring prosperity to India. Now, as regards the inquiry, I can only urge that it is much needed. I affirm that every good thing done for the people of India has arisen out of an inquiry in this House for reform; every kind of progress accepted and carried into effect in India has been under the direct orders this House has given in opposition to those of the officials. What we ask is that the orders given by this House should be carried out, and above all things that a Commission should inquire whether those orders have been carried out. If they have not, then steps should be taken to put them in force. I say, sir, that it is the duty of this House and the country to do this. It would be our duty, even if it meant a loss to this country. But so far from there being a loss to the country, there would be an enormous gain. As my friend (Mr. Naoroji) has pointed out, the whole trade of India comes to only about a couple of shillings a head per year. With reasonable prosperity, if India took, say, only £1 per head of

our goods, it would amount, as has been pointed out, to as much as the whole trade we have with the world. Therefore, if these steps are taken, I say that this inquiry is the only means by which they can be accomplished. It is the duty of this House to order the Commission, and it would be beneficial to the people of India, and to the people of this country.—(*Cheers.*)

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY FOR INDIA.

I.

[*On the motion to go into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts, on August 14, 1894, Mr. Samuel Smith moved as an amendment*: "*That, in the opinion of this House, a full and independent Parliamentary inquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens, the nature of the revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of Government in India.*"]

Sir William Wedderburn said: When I feel compelled to bring forward any Indian grievance, I sometimes wonder whether the people of India are worse off when the Tories are in power or when the Liberals are in office, because under neither condition is there any proper and effective control exercised over the officials of India. As the House is aware the people of India have practically no voice in the management of their own affairs. The Government of India is a Government of officials by officials for officials and the policy which is carried out is practically dictated

by a small clique at Simla, representing the civil and military classes, whose views are in favour of aggression abroad and repression at home. Under these circumstances the people of India have frequently to appeal to this House and to the Government at home in order to get a redress of grievances. When the Tory party are in power they support the privileged officials. They have a kindly feeling towards what is called a spirited foreign policy, such as has taken our forces to Afghanistan on more than one disastrous occasion, and has taken us to Burma and caused a very great difficulty in our present Indian finance. They have also a regard for the privileges to which the official class of India clings. But, on the other hand, while the Tories are in power we have the great advantage that when such a policy is being followed it is denounced by the great and wise and eminent men who sit on the front bench on the other side. Unfortunately when the Liberals come into power, and there arises a hope that different principles will be applied to the management of Indian affairs, those voices of denunciation are hushed, and the Liberal Secretary of State then speaks with the voice of the India Office, and with a feeling of trust in the officials rather than of trust in the people of India. I recognise that the position of the Secretary of State is a very difficult one, because he is surrounded by an India Council, which is chiefly composed of those very officials who, in Simla, have carried out the policy of which I complain. After they have carried out their sweet will in India they come here to Whitehall and sit as advisers of the Secretary of State for India. These gentlemen are extremely able men, but they have this defect, that they are the very people who have carried out these measures of which the people of India are complaining. Very hard things have been said of them.

I will not go back to Edmund Burke and the other great names who have interested themselves in former times in Indian matters, but I will quote the words with regard to them of a great political leader, whose words I am sure will carry weight with the hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House. That great leader said that men brought up in the military or civil service of India might be gifted with great intelligence and possessed of great knowledge, but, born as they had been in the abuses of the system, they were not sensible of such abuses, and with such men exercising supreme authority you could not feel sure that you would get the redress that English protection ought to secure. These are not the words of a fanatic or an agitator but of Mr. Disraeli in the great debate in 1878. Therefore I say that the Secretary of State is in a very difficult position. I have the highest respect for the right hon. gentleman—for his great ability and his great experience—who now occupies that position; but it is impossible that he should not take a view coloured by his surroundings. It is not only the members of the India Council, but most of the London Press, are more or less influenced by the people who have retired from the Service of India, and who will support that view, and also those views are very strongly supported by the majority of the retired Indian officials who are now sitting in this House. The gist of our complaint, then, is this, that there is no adequate machinery at present for redressing the grievances of the people of India. In a government like that in India, which is absolutely despotic, many cases may be decided rightly. But in those cases in which the people are dissatisfied—whether as a class or as individuals—they have to appeal against a decision in India, and they feel it a gross injustice that the Court of Appeal should be practi-

cally made up of the very officials of whose acts they are complaining. If we cannot get a hearing for our grievances it is owing, no doubt, to the pressure on the time of the House. And if we cannot get a hearing it appears to me an eminently reasonable proposal of my hon. friend the member for Flintshire, supported by the hon. member for Finsbury, that the House should appoint a Parliamentary Committee to inquire into the facts, and ascertain whether our view of the case, which is so very different from that of those who have spoken on the other side, is correct. I should just like to say a few words with reference to the position of this House with regard to the Government of India in India and also the Government of India in this country. I am brought to do this on account of the well known speech which the late Viceroy made before leaving Calcutta, and to which I gave notice that I would call the attention of the House. The purport of the speech of Lord Lansdowne was that the great danger to India lay in the tendency to transfer power from the Indian Government to the British Parliament. This sentiment has obtained the approval of certain hon. members, and it therefore makes it necessary that I should say a few words with regard to it. In the first place, it seems to me a curious thing that any Viceroy or any one under the Crown, should talk about the transfer of power from the Indian Government to the British Parliament. Surely the power lies with the British Parliament already. What does the Viceroy mean by talking of transferring power from the Indian Government to the British Parliament? I say that it is only with Parliament and the Crown that any power lies. Then he spoke of irresponsible persons interfering in Indian affairs. Who are the irresponsible persons? Is it members of this House? I say they are

people who are responsible to their constituents. The irresponsible people sit in another House altogether. Again, Lord Lansdowne said that the Government is marred by the upsetting of the policy of a body of experts by another body, that is to say by the House of Commons. I never heard before that the policy of the British Empire was decided at Calcutta or by any experts employed under the Crown. The policy with regard to India is settled by Parliament and the Crown, and the idea of Parliament upsetting a policy of their own servants seems to me quite grotesque. Finally, Lord Lansdowne said that this House was swayed by emotion and sentiment. By that I understand he meant that it was accessible to the dictates of justice and humanity. These are some of the observations which naturally occur to one in looking at this speech, which I am sorry to say obtained approval in the other House. It also appears to me important to refer to this because there is doubtless a certain amount of truth underlying what Lord Lansdowne said, though what he said was said unbecomingly, and on a most unbecoming occasion in Calcutta. I grant that India should be governed mainly in India, but that is subject to the special conditions that Indian public opinion should be heard and considered, and that the administration shall be in strict accordance with the policy laid down by Parliament and the Crown. The different functions the House of Commons should exercise, and the India Office in London and the Government in Calcutta should exercise, were well stated by Mr. Roebuck in a very notable speech in the great debate of 1887. Mr. Roebuck said that it was necessary to draw a distinction between the Government of India in India and the Government of India in England, that a clear distinction must be recognised between the two in all the arrangement

for the government of that country. First they had to arrange the machinery in England, which would bring to bear upon the actual Governors of India the opinion of the Parliament and people of England, and make them realise their responsibility to that opinion; and, secondly, they had to constitute the Government in India which should carry out their plans when they had been matured in England. And then Mr. Roebuck added that for the first operation they did not require a knowledge of the people of India, a knowledge of the general principles of human nature being all that was required. The people of India have, and they know that they have, a most valuable protection in the common sense, humanity, and knowledge of business possessed by the public men who sit in the House of Commons, though these men may have no special acquaintance with India at all. Parliament has to lay down the principles according to which India is to be governed. The Government of India should administer India in accordance with these principles, and the Secretary of State for India should see that they do so. These are the functions which appear quite clear, and if members do appear sometimes to be irresponsible in their criticisms, and sometimes to take up what appear to be small matters of detail, it is solely for this reason—because the people of India have no reasonable voice in the original administration of affairs in India, and because we do not consider that the India Office acts as an impartial court of appeal to redress the grievances when they are brought before them. I entirely go with those who would not interfere with the Indian Government so long as it is in harmony with the wishes of the people there, and as long as it carries out the general principles established in this country. I quite realise the danger which arises if the central

body is brought either to the India Office or to this House. I should like to say a few words—not in any detail, because I know that the right hon. gentleman the Secretary of State is going to speak upon the subject, and I do not want to limit the time he will have at his disposal—as regards the question of the redress of grievances. There were a number of important points referred to with regard to the Famine Insurance Fund, and I feel bound to say one or two words regarding that. Our complaint with reference to the Famine Insurance Fund was this—and my hon. and learned friend the member for Hackney forgot to mention one very important factor in the question—that the Famine Insurance Fund, call it what you like, was formed mainly from the proceeds of a special tax imposed in order to construct that fund, and the excuse for levying this tax at the time was that the funds were solely and exclusively to be used as a famine insurance. When the people of India, knowing from sad experience the difficulty of obtaining fulfilment of such pledges, came to Lord Lytton and begged that the money should be paid into a special fund, and expressed doubt that it might not always be maintained for that purpose, Lord Lytton rebuked them severely, saying that the mere suspicion of this was a calumny. But this is the very thing which the Government of India has now done, and which I am afraid a Liberal Government is going to confirm. In a table which has been referred to, and which, I believe, the hon. and learned gentleman has seen, the actual proceeds of those taxes are shown, and I think I am right in saying that last year those taxes produced more than 1,500,000 tens of rupees. And for what purpose has this Fund been used? To give compensation for exchange to the European Services, and this in a very reckless way. Com-

pensation has been granted without any discrimination. The man who took service when the rupee was worth 2 *s.* may be entitled to something, but not the man who has taken service when it is worth 1*s.* 1*d.* But the scheme equally benefits the man who has joined the Service to-day and the man who joined twenty-years ago. I say that it is a most reckless mode of procedure, and by it you have defeated the operation of the natural law which would have tended to the economical employment of the people of the country in the services of the Government, because although a rupee is only worth 1*s.* 1*d.* here, equally good service for the rupee can be got in India as before. When we ask for this inquiry, we are only asking for what the wisdom of our ancestors found to be beneficial in former times. There has been no inquiry which has not got rid of a good many undesirable things. The inquiry of 1833 got rid of the great trade monopoly, and that of 1853 struck a great blow at jobbery. There will be no danger in granting such an inquiry. The danger arises from refusing it, and from neglecting to hear and redress the reasonable grievances of the people. (*Hear, hear.*)

II.

[*On Mr. H. H. Fowler, introducing the Indian Budget, in Committee in the House of Commons on August 17th, 1894.*]

Sir William Wedderburn said:—I desire to thank my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for having granted a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry. It is not all that has been asked for, but it is a step in the right direction, and considering his high reputation as a financier, it seems appropriate that the first step should be a financial one. I trust that the Committee will be made so strong, both in numbers and in the selection of members, and that

the reference will be so comprehensive, that real benefit will accrue to India. I fear, however, that the tone of the speech just delivered by the Secretary of State will cause profound disappointment in India. It appears to me that my right hon. friend has abandoned the judicial attitude which the Secretary of State should maintain, and has constituted himself the spokesman and apologist of the official views of which we complain. We all know that there are two sides to these questions. There is the view taken by the people of India, and there is the official Anglo-Indian view. The case for the officials was put before the Secretary of State by the India Office, and by the London press, and by official representatives on the other side of the House. But what chance had the people of India of getting a hearing? Responsible public associations in India have forcibly stated their case, which is diametrically opposed to the official case, and I have made a detailed representation to the Secretary of State upon the subject. I am glad to say that that representation has received no small support from members of this House. But in his speech the right hon. gentleman has not deigned even to notice that representation or the facts, figures, and arguments which it contained. Listening to the speech, no one would have guessed that the Secretary of State had before him any case at all for the people of India. The right hon. gentleman's speeches were pure official optimism. He merely stated the official case, and blessed it altogether. My right hon. friend has complained that I called him the tool of the India Council. I do not think I used that word. But I desire to explain that I did not regard my right hon. friend as a willing tool, but as an unconscious victim of his surroundings in the India Office, a sufferer from the bad political atmosphere in which

his work was carried on. We often read how a stout working man, being lowered into an old disused well, is overcome by the fumes of carbonic acid gas. And the same sort of thing happens to every Liberal Secretary of State whom we send to the India Office. My right hon. friend is quite unconscious of this, but this unconsciousness is the most dangerous part of the whole business. I believe that scientific men have invented an instrument which will test the air and give warning in such cases, and I think I can provide my hon. friend with a similar safeguard. The test is to be found in the cheers that he receives in this House and in the quarter from which they proceed. During his two speeches the right hon. gentleman has received continuous cheers from the Tory benches, while silence reigned among his own supporters, and a Liberal Minister, instead of being gratified, should be warned that there must be something radically wrong when he thus receives the enthusiastic approval of his political opponents. Proceeding to notice points in the Financial Statement, the hon. gentleman expressed his astonishment that the Secretary of State should declare that there was no Famine Insurance Fund, and that there had never been one. He did not know under what technical plea this statement could be justified. The fact was that special new taxes were imposed for the express purpose of famine insurance. To quote the words of the Finance Minister, Sir John Strachey, the proceeds of these new taxes were to be expended for the purpose of providing what he called an insurance against famine, and for no other purpose whatever. Was that not a Famine Insurance Fund? Sir John Strachey called it a sacred trust, and if the proceeds of the taxes were not paid into a separate account in the name of trustees it was simply to avoid

inconvenience in book-keeping. Being appealed to, the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, minuted to the following effect: "The sole justification for the increased taxation which has just been imposed upon the people of India for the purpose of insuring this Empire against the worst calamities of future famine, so far as an insurance can now be practically provided, is the pledge we have given that a sum not less than £ 1,500,000 sterling, which exceeds the amount of the additional contributions obtained from the people for this purpose shall be annually applied to it." The people, grown shy by sad experience, still doubted, and were severely rebuked by Lord Lytton. He again declared that the sole purpose of the additional taxation was to preserve from famine, and he said that to insinuate the contrary was to institute a calumny. What now was being done? The special taxes were still being levied, producing annually about Rx. 1,750,000, and the Government proposed to apply these proceeds to increase official salaries. The right hon. gentleman might call these transactions by such technical name as he liked, but the people of India considered that a distinct pledge had been broken, and that a great injustice had been done. I desire (continued Sir W. Wedderburn) now to notice one or two points in the financial statement. Mr. Westland, as Finance Minister, had declared that exchange, and exchange only, was the cause of the present deficit, and the Secretary of State appears to endorse this view; also Mr. Westland maintained that the increased cost of exchange exceeded the increase of net revenue. I venture to differ entirely from both these conclusions. To ascertain the facts I have taken a period of ten years, dating back to the happy time when Lord Ripon and Sir Evelyn Baring (now Lord Cromer) were in charge of the finances, when there was a

balance to the good, and when taxes were remitted. Comparing that time with the present, it appears that the increased annual cost of exchange is now about Rx. 6,000,000, whereas the increased net revenue is Rx. 8,500,000, showing an excess of Rx. 2,500,000. Or taking the aggregate of ten years to total excess Rx. 18,500,000, so that the expansion of revenue is enough to pay for the cost of exchange twice over. The real cause of the financial difficulty is the excessive unreproductive expenditure upon the Military and Civil Services. In all other departments, including those most beneficial to the people, the reductions have been very large. As compared with ten years ago, the saving amounts to Rx. 4,644,683, which exceeds the cost in exchange for those departments by Rx. 873,602. On the other hand, instead of reductions, the Military and Civil Services cost Rx. 8,854,346 a year more than they did ten years ago, and this, together with Rx. 3,322,786, the exchange connected with those services, came to the great total of Rx. 12,177,132, which swallowed up the surplus inherited from Lord Ripon, Rx. 722,622, the whole increase of net revenue Rx. 9,604,871, and the savings in other departments Rx. 873,602, and in addition produced a deficit of Rx. 976,637. All these figures have, on behalf of the people of India, been carefully placed before the right hon. gentleman the Secretary of State, but, as already observed, he has not considered it necessary even to refer to these contentions in the statement he has just laid before the Committee. Another point to which I take strong exception in the right hon. gentleman's speech in his statement that land revenue in India is not a tax upon the people, but only a share of the rent. That is no doubt the theory, but the practice is very different. I would beg to commend to my right hon. friend the perusal

of certain Minutes recorded in the India Council, which he will find at p. 134 of Appendix I. of the Famine Commission Report. These Minutes relate to a proposal of Lord Hobart to stop all enhancements of the land revenue in the Madras Presidency. It there appears that the instruction of Sir Charles Wood was that the land revenue should not exceed one half of the free rent. But it is admitted that this was a "mere paper instruction." Sir Bartle Frere, than whom there was not a better practical authority on this point, stated that the State demand arely, if ever, fulfilled the requirements of the India Office instruction, and that with the exception of a very few localities, infinitesimally small, a true land tax was practically unknown. As regards the Bombay Presidency, he said that the assessment came under three classes. First, a Land Tax fixed more or less arbitrarily; second, a full rent leaving nothing to the cultivator but the wages of his labour and the interest on his capital; and, third, a rent and something more trenching on the wages of labour or the profits of capital. To those three classes Sir Louis Mallet added yet another, where the land yielded no rent at all, and the assessment was taken wholly from that portion of the crop which represented the wages of labour. When my right hon. friend has leisure to read the Famine Commission Report, the Report of the Deccan Riots Commission, and the Debates in Council regarding the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act, he will doubtless modify very materially his views regarding the Indian cultivator's burdens and condition. The right hon. gentleman has said that the cultivator's improvements are not taxed. How does he account for the enhancements in the Panwel taluka, which have been brought to his notice by a question in the House? An instance has been given

where a cultivator's assessment has been raised from 4 rupees to 45 rupees. Was the difference the increase in the value of the land apart from the cultivator's industry? I will give the right hon. gentleman a clue which he might follow up. Let him inquire what "Pot-Kharab" means in the Bombay Presidency, and he will find that these enhancements are upon reclamations and improvements within the cultivator's holdings which he was encouraged to make by the promise that they would not be taxed. The right hon. gentleman was very indignant because the member for Flintshire said that there was corruption among the Settlement officers, but if he will inquire he will find that one main excuse for these enhancements was the alleged frauds on the part of the officials who made the original settlements. The objection taken to the military expenditure is one of policy more than account. I, in agreement with the right hon. gentleman the member for the Forest of Dean, do not grudge money for the true defence and safety of India. But what I object to is the policy of aggression upon our weaker neighbours, a policy equally unjust and dangerous. India is surrounded by a frontier of sterile mountainous regions, inhabited by wild tribes. This constitutes a natural rampart, like a thorny hedge, and it is perfect folly either to penetrate into that hedge or to destroy it. This policy of aggression was foreseen and denounced in the Viceroy's Council by Mr. Ilbert and Sir Auckland Colvin when the first great addition of 30,000 men was made to our army with reference to the attack on Burma. These gentlemen said this increased force would be used for purposes of aggression and not of defence, and this prophecy has come true. For purposes of defence in India, an efficient regular force was no doubt required, but the true safety of the country

depended upon this force being backed by a full treasury and a contended people. Anther important question is the fair distribution of the military burden between India and Great Britain. The conquest of Upper Burma was undertaken purely for supposed Imperial interests, and it is a burning shame that the whole expense has been placed upon the Indian taxpayer, who was entirely opposed to the whole operation. During the past eight years a charge of some £12,500,000 has fallen upon India on account of Upper Burma, and it appears likely that this charge will continue at the rate of about £1,500,000 annually. With such treatment, is it to be wondered at that India is in financial difficulty? Among the remedies now required one of the most important is a fair distribution of military expenditure between India and this country. Then there seems no good reason why the Military and Civil expenditure should not be brought to the figure it stood at in 1884-85 during the happy time of Lord Ripon. The compensation to the Services should be suspended until the finances can afford this indulgence. And as regards the future, care and economy would be insured if only £5 of the salary of the Secretary of State for India was put upon the Imperial Estimates. What did Mr. Disraeli say on this point? "Have the people of England ever cared one jot about Indian reform? No, they have not, and for this very simple reason—that the people of England do not pay for India: because so long as Indian finance is separated from English finance, and so long as the people of England do not pay in consequence of misgovernment in India, so long, depend upon it, they will not care for Indian reform." This was a formidable indictment against our national honesty and unselfishness. I trust my right hon. friend will do his best to convince the people of India that their welfare is his first object.

INDIAN EXPENDITURE.

[*Mr. Naoroji, in resuming the debate on the Address, said in the House of Commons on February 12, 1895 : I beg to move as an amendment to add the following words, " And we humbly pray that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to direct your Majesty's Minister to so adjust the financial relations between the United Kingdom and British India, with regard to all the expenditure incurred in the employment of Europeans in the British-Indian services, civil and military, in this country and in India, that some fair and adequate portion of such expenditure should be borne by the British Exchequer in proportion to the pecuniary and political benefits accruing to the United Kingdom from your gracious sway over India ; and that the British Treasury should sustain a fair and equitable portion of all expenditure incurred on all military and political operations beyond the boundaries of India in which both Indian and British interests are jointly concerned".*]

Sir William Wedderburn said :—I beg to second the amendment of my hon. friend, and at the same time I must express my great regret in similar terms that no reference to India has been made in the course of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech. The people of India are in a condition of extreme anxiety as to what the nature will be of the promised financial inquiry to which reference was made at the close of last Session. They are anxious to know whether that inquiry is really to go to the root of the matter; whether it will be a genuine attempt to learn the true causes of, and to apply a real remedy to, the disastrous

financial condition of the country. (*Hear, hear.*) In this anxiety we may truly say many members of this House share. (*Hear, hear.*) I would particularly refer to those hon. gentlemen who represent Lancashire constituencies—(*Hear, hear*)—because they are deeply interested in Indian finance in relation to the imposition of duties upon Lancashire goods. It cannot be too distinctly understood that the imposition of these import duties is a direct result of the excessive expenditure—administrative expenditure in India. The imposition of this new tax is simply one incident in the downward course of Indian finance. It is one of the stages of the rake's career. (*Hear hear, and laughter.*) We have had one or two other notable stages in that career. We have had the closing of the mints which has convulsed exchanges all over the civilised world, and we have had the misappropriation of the Famine Fund which was designed to relieve the distress of the starving people. Therefore, I would ask the hon. members for Lancashire to say that this excessive expenditure should stop, and then the necessity for import duties, whether on cotton or anything else, would cease. (*Hear, hear.*) I think other hon. members are also very much interested to know the terms of this reference. I think that members who are interested in India, and may perhaps be asked to take a part in this Select Committee would like to know whether this inquiry is to be one of real benefit to India and to this country. (*Hear, hear.*) I do not think that they will be very willing to give their time and their labour if it is to be a mere book-keeping enquiry. (*Hear, hear.*) If it is to be of no more value than these bogus audits of the Liberator type—("*Oh*" *and laughter*)—I do not think that hon. members will be willing to give their labour to it. We do not want a mere bogus audit at all. We want to go

into the whole facts of the case—to know what are the causes of the financial difficulty and what are the real remedies by which the finances of India can be put on a good and sound basis. (*Hear, hear.*) And in order to get at the real facts, we challenge inquiry upon certain points. We make four important propositions, and we invite my right hon. friend the Secretary of State to allow us to prove those propositions, or do our best to do so. These are the following. The first is that the condition of the people of India is one of extreme poverty. The second is that the burden of taxation is crushing the people of India, and is more than they can bear. The third is that the proceeds of this taxation are being employed upon useless and mischievous frontier wars, and the fourth is that if this useless military expenditure were stopped, it would not be necessary to impose import duties—that it would be possible even to remove a certain amount of the existing taxation, and to provide funds to meet extreme needs in the way of famine, and for the progress and welfare of the Indian people. (*Hear, hear.*) How does the Secretary of State deal with these propositions? How does he propose to deal with this great question of the condition of the Indian people? We think it a very dreadful thing here in this country—in London—that there should be a submerged tenth, but in India we have a submerged fifth—a fifth of the people who have only one meal a day. As has been stated, they never have their hunger satisfied. How has the Secretary of State met this demand for inquiry into the condition of the people. He refuses to go into the question of revenue altogether, and he has only offered us an inquiry into expenditure. It appears to me that the proper logical course is to take income first and expenditure afterwards. (Hear, hear.) It seems a very curious

thing to inquire how much we ought to spend before we know how much we have got to spend. If a private individual is in pecuniary difficulties and wants to get his affairs put straight, he first ascertains what his income is. If he is a large landowner, he ascertains whether his farmers can pay their rents, and after finding out what he may reasonably expect his income to be, he is able to decide what his expenditure can reasonably be. In the same way as regards India—we do not deny that a fair amount of value has been received, but we say that the expenditure is upon a scale too large for India. We say that India should cut her coat according to her cloth. When the right hon. gentleman enables us to ascertain how much income she really and properly has we shall be able to say how much she can reasonably spend. Therefore we very much regret that the India Office declines to go into the question of the revenue, and to enable us to judge of the capacity of the Indian people to bear taxation, or of the amount of taxation that can reasonably be raised from India. I think that this inquiry is all the more necessary—and I say it with great regret—because my right hon. friend appears to be possessed with such a spirit of optimism, and to take such a very rosy view of the condition of the Indian taxpayer, and also of the financial condition of the people of India. It appears to me that to take any such optimistic view is a dangerous delusion. (*Hear, hear.*) My hon. friend the member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) pointed out that the maximum estimate of the average income of the Indian people was 27 rupees per head, or something like $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day. What is there out of that to tax? (*Hear, hear.*) Where is the surplus that you can tax? You must remember the great rayat class. They have no savings. They, in fact, have less than nothing because they are

terribly in debt to the village money-lender, and have no reserve of food at all. A single failure in the harvest produces starvation and death by hunger to hundreds of thousands and even to millions of these people. How are a people like that to bear taxation? And how are they to be said to be lightly taxed if they are paying nearly double in proportion to what is paid by the inhabitants of this wealthy country, who, as we know, themselves find it hard enough to pay as it is. (*Hear, hear.*) Therefore, we say that the condition of the Indian people cries loudly for most careful inquiry. And I think my right hon. friend takes, similarly, a too favourable view of the financial condition of the Government of India. He has said that it is absurd to talk about its being insolvent, although we know it is very difficult to find money to pay current expenses; and I would draw the attention of the right hon. gentleman to a very interesting and authoritative article in the *Nineteenth Century* by Sir Auckland Colvin, the former Minister of Finance for India, in which he says that unless this military expenditure on aggressive operations is stopped there will be only three alternatives before the Indian Government. Those alternatives are either that the British Treasury should come in to help, or that the people should be further taxed, in addition to their existing taxes, or else that the Indian Government should be declared bankrupt. Those are the three alternatives which he puts before us, and I think in face of that it can hardly be safe to take a rosy view of Indian finance. As regards the state of that finance I will only state one fact which will show to the House the dire straits in which the Government of India now are. That fact is that they have imposed the import duties which are giving such very great ssatisfaction throughout the important district of Lan

shire. I do not suppose any one will think that Ministers of the Crown would be willing to excite the anger of Lancashire members if they had not found that it was impossible otherwise to meet their liabilities. They must have squeezed the Indian people pretty dry before they came and asked Manchester to help them with money. And in this connection I hope I may be excused if I say one word to the hon. members who sit for Lancashire divisions, and if I beg them to be so good as to consider the unfortunate position of the Indian taxpayer in this matter. The Indian taxpayer does not want to have import duties imposed. He has asked to have them, but only as the lesser of two evils, because, as has been pointed out, the import duties will fall chiefly upon the wealthier classes, and also because they constitute an indirect tax which causes a minimum of oppression in its collection. The taxpayers of India, I repeat, are only asking to have the form of taxation which will be the least painful to them. They prefer to be chastised with whips rather than with scorpions; and they beg as a matter of favour to be allowed to pay 5 per cent. upon their imported goods rather than to have an increase of the duty upon salt, which is now 4,000 per cent. upon a commodity which is consumed every day by the very poorest of the poor. Therefore, I would say to the members who represent Lancashire constituencies, do not use all your great influence to secure that the burden, which must be borne by these poor people, shall be imposed in the way that will be the most killing, the most maiming, the most crushing to the poorest classes among them. I would appeal to the great and noble policy that is connected with the names of Manchester and of Mr. John Bright, who was the friend of India first, and of all other interests afterwards; and I would ask the hon.

members of Lancashire divisions to attain their object, which is the same object as ours, by joining hands with us in asking for a reduction of expenditure which is making these import duties necessary. If they will help us to reduce the expenditure they will gain the gratitude of the whole of India and will make unnecessary import duties on cotton goods or anything else. My appeal to have this reduction of expenditure is based on the contention that it is actually mischievous; because in carrying on the aggressive expeditions which make it necessary, we are abandoning the good old safe policy of Lord Lawrence. The policy of Lord Lawrence was that India ought to remain within her natural bounds and barriers, and that the basis for a safe defence of India lay in the contentment of the people themselves, in friendly neighbours, and in a full treasury. But the effect of these aggressions beyond the frontier is that we have an empty treasury, that we have filled our neighbours with fear and hatred and that within our borders we have people who are over taxed and consequently more or less discontented. Therefore we say, let us stop this policy and revert to the good old policy formerly pursued, and then India will be as prosperous as my hon. friend has prophesied—and not only will she be prosperous herself, but she will be the cause of prosperity among the toiling millions of this country. I beg to second the amendment.

THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IN CHITRAL.

On the motion for going into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts, on September 3, 1895, Sir Henry Fowler rose to call attention to the decision recently arrived at the House of Commons by Her Majesty's Government as to the occupation of Chitral. Mr. J. M. Maclean said, he rose to move the Resolution which stood on the paper in his name :— "That this House views with apprehension the continual increase in the burdens of Indian taxpayers, caused by the annexation or military occupation of large areas of unproductive territory on the land frontier of British India."]

Sir W. Wedderburn regretted that the Papers relating to Chitral had not been published earlier. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton complained that the Blue-book did not contain all the necessary Papers, but the late Government had had it in their power to publish all the Papers and Documents at an earlier stage, and that he thought would have been a right and proper course to take. If the case had been put before the public, the late Government would have received a great deal of support in the decision at which they ultimately arrived. As regarded that decision, he entirely concurred in the views that the late Government took. He thanked the right hon. gentleman for the way in which he had sought to raise this question from one of mere temporary expediency, or financial consideration, to a higher level. He should be prepared to vote with his hon. friend the Member for Cardiff upon the Amendment, because it covered the ground occupied by the Chitral question, as well as many other similar questions. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green had seconded the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cardiff, but he regretted that the hon. member's reasons were, as

he stated them, opposed to the whole educated opinion of India. He was sorry that Mr. Naoroji had not been returned to the House, as he could speak more authoritatively on behalf of the Indian people. In that discussion the opinion of the people of India was a very important element. He trusted the public opinion of this country would insist that the question should be looked at from a broader and higher point of view, and that they would consider whether this aggression upon our weaker neighbours in India—this forward policy, as it was called—was right and just. We had no quarrel with these people, and we had no right to deprive them of their land and liberty. He thought that a black man was as much entitled to his life, liberty, and property as a white man. To the ordinary man, the terms of our Proclamation to the frontier tribes conveyed the idea that we only intended to enter that country for the purpose of relieving Dr. Roberston, and that we would not interfere with the independence and liberty of any of the tribes there. He did not care who were the people who upheld the present action. It was a clear breach of faith, for which, primarily, Ministers were responsible, and they must take the responsibility, and could not put it off on Lord Elgin or anyone else. Then, as regarded the grounds upon which the present forward movement had been justified, the Leader of the House placed it on two main grounds. One was the question of prestige; the right hon. gentleman said that if we abandoned any territories that we had once occupied we should strike a blow at our prestige. He thought that his right hon. friend the Member for East Wolverhampton (Sir Henry Fowler) very rightly objected to that word as being a governing rule for our action. What did the word "prestige" mean? Dr. Johnson had said that it was the

Latin for "a lie." In a dictionary which he had consulted, he found the first meaning to be "illusion," that meant self-deception; and the last meaning given was "imposture," that meant the deceiving of others. He left the Government to choose which of the two meanings they would adopt. The second reason given by the Leader of the House was that, from a financial point of view, it would cost us little or nothing, and he said that he had had assurance from the Government of India that the expenditure would not be very large. This information which was now represented as justifying the change of policy turned out to be simply a statement of the political officers, to the effect that the tribes would agree to let this road pass through their territories. He did not think that anyone who had studied these matters would be impressed with the correctness of the information obtained by the political officers on the frontier. Really, by far the best way of getting reliable information was the old method of placing a native agent in these border places. He was a Muhammadan, generally of priestly position. He could mingle with the people, and could give exact information upon all border questions, without raising the same suspicion or prejudice that a European officer raised; and he was able to live there without creating disturbances or rivalries among the different claimants for the throne, or those who advocated different policies. The native agents did not get us into the difficulties that Dr. Robertson brought about in the case of Chitral. Anybody reading the Blue-book would see what a humiliating position we were placed in through the interference of the British officer who carried with him all the authority of the British Government. As regarded the cost, the estimates were quite untrustworthy, and this had been the case in the Afghan War of

1877 and the Abyssinian War. It was remarkable that the occupation of Chitral should be advocated on the ground that it continued the policy of Lord Lytton in 1878, which had brought us so much disaster, loss, and disgrace. Lord Lawrence's policy, on the other hand, was based on experience and common sense. He said that Nature had given us a strong rampart of rock, and mountains, and torrents, and that we should maintain those natural boundaries. Nature had also provided volunteers to man those ramparts in the native tribes, who hated foreign interference of any kind. It was just the same as if a farmer had a thick, thorny hedge round his orchard. He would be very foolish if he were to remove those thorns and bariers, and still more foolish if he were to spend his substance in cutting a hole through that hedge and let the thieves through to steal his fruit. If we made this road fit for artillery, though he was not an alarmist, he must say that we were just paving the way for a Russian invasion. That was mere common sense, and that was the view which Lord Roberts held in 1880, when he was responsible for the defence of India. The noble Lord then held that, the longer and more difficult the road along which an enemy must approach through the mountain passes was, the better it would be for the defence, and that, so far from shortening such a road by a single mile or rendering it easier, he would prefer to lengthen the road and to increase the difficulties of it. That was the opinion of Lord Roberts at that time, and the noble Lord had not written or said anything since that detracted in any way from the force of that statement. The noble Lord had certainly written a letter to the *Times*, in which he said that the defence of such a road would depend very much upon the friendly feeling of the tribes to our Government. Was it not a

curious way of gaining their friendship to rob them of the independence which they valued so highly? Dr. Leitner, a gentleman who was well acquainted with the state of feeling that existed among the mountain tribes on our Indian frontier had well said that they always regarded the first invaders as their enemies, and the second invaders as their deliverers. The proper course for us to take in the matter was to leave the native tribes alone, and to persuade them that we did not want their country because we did not think it worth taking, and then they would regard us as their best friends, and if any pressure were put upon them by either Russia or the Amir, they would at once throw themselves into our arms. That was the policy that had been pursued by Lord Lawrence, Lord Mayo, Lord Northbrook and Lord Ripon, and it was only set aside by Lord Lytton. They ought to return to the well-tried system, which had been found both effective and economical. By pursuing an opposite policy we should suffer loss of reputation for good faith, we should meet with great financial difficulties, and we should cause great dissatisfaction among the people of India. As regarded the financial question involved in the imposition of the Indian cotton import duties, he hoped that the hon. Members from Lancashire would carefully examine into the matter, because, if a policy of annexation were to be pursued, those duties might, in all probability, have to be raised from five to ten per cent. Such a policy was unjust, because under it the tribes would be deprived of their lands and liberties. Moreover, to follow such a policy would be an act of bad faith, because all those people were deliberately informed that we only intended to remain in their country until our immediate purpose was fulfilled. Such a policy would be uinous both politically and financially, while the people of

India would see money spent in a needless way, and would see no hope of ever getting the taxation which pressed so heavily upon the poor of the country lightened, or applied to those purposes of improvement and advancement which we were so anxious to see carried into effect. He, therefore, fully approved of the policy of the late Government in reference to this question. He believed that the policy which was good then was good now, and that so far from any change in the circumstances of India having occurred which would make the policy less successful, everything tended to show that it would be more effective than ever. The fact that the boundaries of India had been delimited on the frontiers of Russia and of the Amir's country ought to induce us to return to the good, old, and humane policy which had given India a full treasury, and friendly neighbours on the frontiers, and a contented people at home.

SPEECH ON THE INDIAN BUDGET, 1895.

[*The House went into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts, and the formal resolution was submitted in the House of Commons on September 4, 1895, as follows :—"That it appears, by the accounts laid before this House, that the total revenue of India for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1894, was Rx. 90,565,214; that the total expenditure in India and in England charged against the revenue was Rx. 92,112,212; that there was an excess of expenditure over revenue of Rx. 1,546,998; and that the capital outlay on railways and irrigation works was Rx. 3,621,252."*]

Sir W. Wedderburn said :—No doubt by Act of Parliament it was required that a financial statement should be

placed on the Table by the middle of May, but the fact was that was never done. He did not complain on that account of the present Government. He had rather to thank the Leader of the House for not attempting to take the Budget last night. He was glad to hear some of the sentiments expressed by the noble Lord. He stated that his principle was that India should be administered for the benefit of India. The noble Lord also stated that he should hold the balance steadily and firmly as between all contending interests. The holding the balance firmly was a very difficult thing indeed, and the noble Lord would need all his determination to do so, because they must remember that there were two very antagonistic views on Indian subjects. On the one hand there was the European official view of all questions, and on the other hand there was the general public opinion of the Indian people. On the official side there was all that power to which the noble Lord referred. They were always in power; they had complete authority over every question. What was the position of the people of India? They had been referred to as being dumb, and it was very difficult to have their views placed before the country. One of the complaints made by those who criticised the Indian Government was that far too much of the revenue was spent on military purposes. One reason for this was that the military element was too strongly represented on the Council of the Viceroy. They did not say that the money was wrongly spent, but they said that the whole standard of expenditure in India was more than the country could afford. The noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, attributed our financial difficulties to loss on exchange; but that was not the principal cause of the present difficulty. They said that the military policy was the principal cause of it. The Government

claimed that they had no control over loss by exchange, but that was only true as regards the automatic increase. In the last seven years the increase in civil and military expenditure had been Rx. 5,429,000 and the increased loss by exchange on this amount was Rx. 848,000. This was within the control of the Government, and amounted to a total of Rx. 6,277,000 against Rx. 4,195,000, the automatic loss by exchange. The total increase in unreproductive military and civil expenditure with attendant exchange was thus about Rx. 10,500,000 and this had swallowed up Rx. 5,000,000 the increase in revenue, Rx. 2,500,000 economics in other departments, and Rx. 3,000,000 new taxation. The increase in revenue was Rx. 5,000,000 and that was not obtained without inflicting great hardship upon the people. I meant a further turning of the screw, a more rigid and severe collection of the revenue. Something had been said about the pressure on the people of the salt tax. Any severity in the collection of the tax would add much hardship. Then there was the increase in the land revenue. Complaints were made as to the excessive enhancement of the revenue. The rent of small holdings had been raised to an enormous extent, as much as tenfold at one stroke. That had been done all over the country, and it was producing a feeling of dissatisfaction and unrest which was of the most dangerous kind. He hoped this matter would receive very careful attention. A hearing should be given to the complaints that were being made, and the mere assurance of local officials should not satisfy the Secretary of State. Three millions more had been raised by the new taxation; hon. members from Lancashire should clearly understand; that the extra three millions which had been obtained by the import duties had directly been raised in order to fill up this vacuum of three

millions for the increase of civil and military expenditure. The figures given above were the official figures, only brought to account in a somewhat different manner. He considered the mode followed by the Government of India, especially as regards loss by exchange, and computation of the public debt, to be inaccurate and misleading, and he had put down an amendment to that effect. The particulars he had set forth in a printed memorandum which he had circulated to the noble Lord and to Members of the House. It was very difficult to understand these accounts at the very best, and the question of the debt which was raised in his proposed Amendment was very important indeed. It required a very expert knowledge properly to allocate different amounts between three different headings. An item of expenditure might either be put down as current expenditure, it might find its way into ordinary debt, or it might be put aside as a debt on capital account, invested in public works of a reproductive kind. Very great care should be exercised as regards the allocation of any item, and any confusion that might arise amongst these three headings might lead to considerable misunderstanding. The particular item to which he had addresssed his Amendment on the Paper would be found at page 82 of the financial statement. In column three of that statement would be found the permanent debt incurred during the year 1893-4. It would there be seen that there was the figure 4,043,311, but nothing was stated as to what that figure was, whether tens of rupees or pounds sterling. He asked the noble Lord what that figure was, because it would be found that that amount had been made up out of several different items. In these financial statements the debt of India was shown under two forms; the debt in India, which was shown in tens of

rupees, and the debt in England, which was shown in pounds sterling. The new debt incurred in India during the year 1893-5 was set down at Rx. 3,719,000, and during that year Rx. 1,110,000, of debt was discharged, leaving the amount of net debt incurred during that year at Rx. 2,609,000. The new debt which India incurred in England during the year 1893-4 was set down at £ 2,686,000 ; during the year £ 1,251,000 of the debt was discharged, leaving the net amount of debt incurred here £ 1,435,000. These two items together produced the figure of 4,043,000 to which he had referred. What was it ? It was mixed pounds and tens of rupees ; possibly a bi-metallic currency of a novel kind. (*Laughter*). He, therefore, asserted this item of 4,043,000 was inacurate and misleading. The figure must be either pounds sterling or tens of rupees ; if tens of rupees, then it was quite evident that something must be added in order to bring the £ sterling to the denomination of Rx. He had done that, and, putting the exchange according to what it stood at when the debt was incurred, instead of 4,043,000, it made Rx. 4,950,000. On the other hand, if they were pounds sterling, the rupees must be reduced to that denomination, and then the item would be about £ 3,000,000. A very great discrepancy, therefore, arose. He believed that the intention of the financial statement was to show the amount in tens of rupees ; but, not only the public but the Indian Government itself, had been misled ; and to prove this, he would refer to a statement at page 94 of the financial paper. The noble Lord would find, at page 95, this same item of 4,043,000, and it was there called tens of rupees. The reason why this matter was so important was because it affected the credit and position of the Indian Government whether an increase or

a decrease was made in the ordinary debt or whether an increase or a decrease was made on the reproductive capital. He would also point out to the noble Lord that, apparently, credit was taken in these accounts for this distinction, and he would refer to page 80, at the foot of which appeared an item termed expenditure not charged to revenue. The amount, the total of which purported to be expenditure upon reproductive public works, amounted to a total of 3,621,000. He presumed that it was intended to set that amount off against the debt of 4,043,000. But, if this were the case, it made a very great difference whether the amount were Rx. 4,043,000, or Rx. 4,950,000 ; and he would ask the noble Lord to state what had become of the difference. The same doctrine must, he contended, be applied to the whole debt, and as regards the last 10 years this error would create a difference of Rx. 12,000,000. It was very desirable that the public should be encouraged to look into the question of Indian Accounts. They were like the shareholders in a big concern, and they were entitled to have the accounts so presented that they could understand the whole effect of them very easily. As to the Famine fund, if the noble Lord would look again into its history, he would find that special taxes were levied and allocated for the maintenance of the fund, and when Lord Lytton was questioned with respect to its permanence, he most indignantly repudiated the idea of its being touched. As to compensation to the Services for loss by exchange, the people of India were willing that those who served them should have fair and reasonable remuneration ; but they complained of the indiscriminate nature of the compensation given. The man who entered the Service when the rupee was at 1*s*. 6*d*, was reasonably disappointed when it fell to 1*s*. 1*d*., but the man who entered the Service

when the rupee was at the lower figure had no right to complain. The difficulties of the Government of India were not primarily due to the loss by exchange, but to extravagance, and the fall in exchange should have been foreseen and provided against from year to year. The Government of India had not any claim to treat the fall as a decree of Providence against which it was useless to contend. The fall in the rupee should be met by corresponding economies. The proportions of extra expenditure fairly debitable to loss on the exchange as compared with that debitable to increased civil and military expenditure was as two to three. A great additional expenditure would be involved by the maintenance of the road to Chitral, and there seemed every probability that some such item of expenditure would appear every year. In the 10 years before this "forward" military policy was undertaken—namely, 1874-84—the total expenditure on these small frontier wars was only Rx. 161,000. In the next 10 years the expenditure had risen to Rx. 4,925,877. That was about half-a-million of tens of rupees every year on frontier expeditions. The subsidies to border tribes were increasingly heavy. As to interfering with the Government of India, he hoped the noble Lord would exercise his own judgment, and decide clearly on the merits of the case, and would not be too much swayed by men who pushed their opinions most honestly, but who were immensely prejudiced by their professional relations and desire for distinction. The accounts of the Indian Government were, on the whole, well kept, good accounts; but the policy of expenditure was what he complained about. The Indian Government should first find what revenue was available, and should then regulate the expenditure accordingly. With regard to railways, there was a general tendency to ask the right

hon. gentleman to increase the expenditure on railways, and there again he hoped the noble lord would hold the balance firmly. There were many powerful interests in this country concerned in pushing the railways in India, such, for instance, as those who supplied the machinery, the rails and the stores. There was one direction in which large economies could be effected by the Government of India, without in the least degree affecting the efficiency of the administration, except, indeed, to improve it. He referred to the increasing employment of natives in the service of their own country. The natives were willing to accept smaller salaries than foreigners. It was, no doubt, true that there were certain appointments which must be held by Europeans in India, but he thought that the number might be limited. The proposal to decentralise and develop the system of provincial financial administration met with his most cordial approval, as he believed that that was a direction in which economy would be attained. It was quite evident that in a great country like India the form of taxation in one part was not suitable to another part. One of the most unfortunate results of the present financial difficulties was that the balances belonging to the different Provincial Governments had been swept into the Imperial Treasury. Those balances represented the economy of the different provinces, and it was a great disaster to local progress and development that they should be spent upon frontier expeditions. He suggested that if the salary of the Secretary of State for India were placed upon the British Estimates it would bring the interest of the House of Commons to bear on the question of Indian expenditure. It was most important that the Secretary of State should know the opinion of the people of India, for whose interests, however, no member was responsible.

He would ask the noble lord, therefore, to learn what the Indian opinion was, as he felt certain that the safety of the Empire would be better attained by increasing their contentment, and by lightening taxes, by giving money for purposes of education and sanitation, and the small improvements that the people required. The people of India had no wish that the Russians should come into India, and with a sympathetic administration the condition of the country would be enormously improved, and ultimately India might be made so prosperous that her trade with Great Britain would be larger than our trade with all the rest of the world. He concluded by moving, as an amendment, to add at the end of the Question the words —"But it is to be regretted that these accounts are inaccurate and misleading as regards the net amount of public debt incurred."

THE RETENTION OF CHITRAL.

[*In the House of Commons on 17th February, 1896. Sir W. Wedderburn moved, as an amendment to the Address, to add the following words at the end: "But we humbly express our regret that the present Government, reversing the policy of their predecessors, have decided not to withdraw from Chitral, thereby violating the pledge expressly given in the Viceroy's proclamation, dangerously adding to Government responsibilities beyond the north West frontier of India and inevitably leading to an increase of the overgrown expenditure in the Indian Military department, and further our regret that the Treaty of 1893 with the Amir of Afghanistan has not been placed before Parliament."*]

The hon. baronet said that in the Queen's Speech reference had been made to Chitral in terms expressing

approval of the permanent occupation of that territory. He could not allow that to pass without a protest and an appeal to the national conscience against a grievous breach of the national good faith. It might be objected that it was now too late for protest or appeal, but in certain matters it was never too late to mend—it was never too late to remove a blot from the good name of the nation. Some people seemed to think that it was never the right time for Parliament to exercise its duty of control over these frontier aggressions on our weaker neighbours. While the plans were being laid there was profound secrecy, and no one knew anything about them; when the explosion took place we were told it was a crisis, and we must not embarrass the Government; and when Naboth was killed and his vineyard permanently occupied, we were told that it was too late, and no use crying over spilt milk. That might be true; but at any rate, we should do our best to prevent other milk being spilt in the same way. But as a matter of fact, in the present case, circumstances had changed since the decision was come to, and there were reasons to reconsider it. The reasons were contained in the Queen's Speech, which announced that the delimitation of the boundary with Russia had been agreed upon. He congratulated Her Majesty's Government on having accomplished this settlement of the spheres of influence. But this matter being settled in a friendly way, fussy activity on our side of the frontier was no longer called for. It was only likely to act as a challenge to Russia, and stimulate her to forward movements. It had repeatedly been alleged in the Anglo-Indian Press that the real object of the Chitral expedition was to show, with reference to the delimitation negotiations with Russia, that we exercised effective control over Chitral, so that it came

within our sphere of influence. If so, these negotiations being now concluded, the retention of Chitral was no longer necessary. He also hoped his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for India would explain in what sense the term "Indian Empire" was used in the Queen's Speech with regard to this delimitation. Did it mean that the Government intended to incorporate all these vast mountainous regions, up to the Pamir boundary, in the Indian dominions vested in Her Majesty by the Government of India Act of 1858? This was a question of the greatest financial importance. If it was intended to annex these territories to India, the proper legal steps should be taken, and he desired to know what those steps would be. If the territories were not part of India the cost of the Chitral expedition must be brone by the Imperial Exchequer, unless the assent of both Houses of Parliament was obtained under section 55 of the Act. The grounds of his protest against the Retention of Chitral were threefold: 1st. We had broken our pledges to the border tribes; 2nd. The retention was politically dangerous; and 3rd. The cost would be ruinous to the Indian people. In the Queen's Speech the border tribes were congratulated on the loyalty with which they had carried out their engagements. It was a great pity we had not shown a similar loyalty. It seemed a case of *sic vos non vobis.* We no doubt appreciated the advantage of other people keeping their promises to us. But if an ounce of example was better than a pound of precept, it was better than a hundred weight of commendation coming from those who were themselves defaulters. Had anyone any real doubt as to the meaning of Lord Elgin's proclamation? Was the declared object of the expedition to rescue Dr. Robertson and then retire? Or was it to seize a military post and remain there? The

circumstances showed what the meaning was. Our people at Chitral were caught in a trap, 180 miles beyond our frontier. To reach them we had to pass through a mountainous wilderness with rapid torrents, deep defiles, and snowy passes. Without the permission of the tribes we could not get through in time. Accordingly, the following Proclamation was issued : "The sole object of the Government of India is to put an end to the present and prevent any future unlawful aggression on Chitral territory, and as soon as this object has been attained the force will be withdrawn. The Government of India have no intention of permanently occupying any territory through which Umra Khan's misconduct may now force them to pass, or of interfering with the independence of the tribes" Mark the words, "sole object." Nothing is said about roads or valuable military positions. The clear meaning was that we would rescue our people, and then withdraw. He recognised no difference as regards moral principles in public and in private concerns. If he thought a thing wrong to do it alone, it would be wrong if he did it jointly with 30 others, or 30 millions of others. How should we view such a promise if given by an individual? Supposing his house was on fire, and one of his family was in danger of being burnt, and supposing he could not reach this child except by passing through the house of a neighbour, a suspicious man who kept his doors bolted and barred. What would be thought of the man who got permission to pass through his neighbour's house by the promise that he would go back at once, who rescued his child, and then told his neighbour that he meant to stay there, because his prestige, his sense of honour, made it impossible for him to retire when he had once come there? The case was on all fours with that of Chitral. If there was any

doubt about the meaning of the Proclamation, let it be submitted to the arbitration of any impartial authority. The right hon. the leader of the House had recommended general arbitration. It was easy to accept arbitration with strong opponents, but it would be more meritorious to accept it with the weak and helpless. Secondly, the permanent occupation of Chitral was dangerous and inexpedient. It was folly to pierce the natural ramparts by which the North-Western frontier was defended, to kill the brave defenders, and to pave the way for a Russian invasion. Also the sheet anchor of our power in India was trust in our good faith, and this trust had now received a grievous blow. Thirdly, the ultimate cost to the people of India would be ruinous. The people of India were miserably poor, and already much over-taxed. No doubt the noble lord would assure the House that the cost would not be great. Such official assurances were made in the Afghan war, which was estimated to cost $1\frac{3}{4}$ millions, but which cost 21 millions; and in the Abyssinian war which was estimated at 3 millions, and cost 10. He warned the noble lord that in permanently occupying such territories the first steps were the easiest and the cheapest --afterwards come the dangers, the difficulties and the heavy expenditure. He reminded him how Lord Roberts had estimated the fighting population of these mountain regions at a quarter of a million of men, mostly well armed, brave, and with an unconquerable love of independence. These men still occupied the wild regions along the Peshawar-Chitral road, and much money would be needed to coerce or bribe them to accept our presence in their country. As regards the Treaty with the Amir he was glad to hear that the noble lord was willing to lay the text on the Table of the House, but it had not yet been produced. So

far as they knew about it, it provided two things : first, to increase by 60 lakhs a year the subsidy paid to the Amir by the unfortunate people of India and second, to hand over Kafiristan to the Amir. If the subsidy were used to improve the condition of the people of Afghanistan, there would be something to show for it, but he believed that it was chiefly employed to provide arms of precision, and the British nation incurred a responsibility as regarded the use of these arms. At present it was alleged that they were being employed in crushing the Kafirs, a brave and interesting race and in reviving a local slave trade in the most odious form. This forward frontier policy, this system of aggression on our weaker neighbours, involved the country in dangerous and discreditable transactions, and was absolutely opposed to the policy laid down by Her Gracious Majesty when she assumed direct charge of India and in her Proclamation of 1858 declared :—" We desire no extension of our present terrritorial possessions and while we will permit no aggression upon our dominions or our rights to be attempted with impunity we shall sanction no encroachment on those of others."

THE COTTON DUTIES AND THE INDIAN POOR.

[*Sir W. Wedderburn on May* 18-1896, *asked leave to move the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to a matter of definite and urgent public importance—viz.* "*The effect of the Indian cotton duties as recently re-arranged, which are causing grave dissatisfaction in India by increasing the burden of taxation imposed upon the poorest classes of the consumers.*" *The Speaker asked whether the hon. gentleman was supported by forty members, as required by the rules whereupon nearly all the members of the Opposition, save those on the front bench, rose in their places.*]

Sir W. WEDDERBURN signified his assent, and then said that very grave dissatisfaction existed in India because a new and uncalled for tax had been placed upon the necessaries of the poorest classes of the Indian consumers. The House was aware that the poorer classes in India already bore more than their fair share of taxation. (*Hear, hear.*) The great problem was to make the well-to-do bear a little larger share of taxation, and almost the only way to do that was to tax the finer classes of cloth, which were only worn by the richer people. The import duties upon the finer cloth was approved of by public opinion in India, but it appeared to be a very inopportune time to put a new tax of 10 lakhs of rupees upon the poorer classes when the taxes which fell upon the richer classes were being reduced by 50 lakhs. The sting of the thing to the people of India was that the new tax was quite unnecessary, and, in their opinion, was only imposed in order to

give satisfaction to the Lancashire people. The people in India had been advised not to use Lancashire-made goods at all. Surely, from a political point of view, such a state of feeling as the giving of such advice exhibited ought not to be allowed to exist another day. There was no need of fresh legislation, because the noble lord could, in his Executive capacity, by a stroke of the pen remove the grievance which was being felt throughout India. This motion was in no sense a party one. He made no attack upon the Government, and far less did he wish to make an attack upon the noble lord, who he was convinced had given great attention to the subject and decided it in the way that appeared to him to be the best all round. But the noble lord laboured under the great disadvantage that he had never been in India, and therefore could not appreciate the strength of the feeling which existed in that country on this question. All classes were united upon this matter, rich and poor, official and unofficial, Indian and Anglo-Indian. The noble lord should not take comfort from thinking that the agitation had ceased. He would refer to the letter given from a leading Maharaja, which Lord Roberts read with approval in another place. That letter said that when the people of India protested openly against any measure it was a compliment to the British nation, because it showed they hoped to get justice. The Maharaja added : " If we had no faith in England and Englishmen all agitation would have ceased, and there would have been a death-like calmness, not perhaps a very desirable thing in the political world of India." The fact was that, if open agitation in this matter ceased in India, it was not because the people had become indifferent, but rather because the grievance complained of had sunk deeply in their minds because they had become hopeless of recei-

ving justice. It was not unfrequently the case that when outer symptoms of discontent were suppressed real danger began. He therefore begged the noble lord to look into the real merits of the case and not to be deceived by mere outward appearances. The whole point of this controversy had reference to the question of protection. When in 1895 Sir Henry James moved the adjournment of the House on the question of the cotton duties, the ground on which he did so was that Lancashire complained that the duties were protective in their nature—that on the finer counts the protection was partial, but that on the coarser counts, owing to the tariff of 1894, it was absolute. Under that tariff all cotton goods imported were made liable to an *ad valorem* duty of 5 per cent. and by way of countervailing duty the excise was placed on yarns above 20's. The argument of Lancashire was that this gave partial protection to the Indian mills as regarded the fine counts, because Lancashire paid upon the manufactured article, whereas the Indian millowners only paid upon the raw material—namely, the yarns. Lancashire further argued that absolute protection was given with regard to the coarser goods of 20's and under, because there was no excise on the yarns of those counts. The right hon. member for Wolverhampton, who was Secretary for India at that time, did not admit the plea of protection, but he said that he was willing to make further enquiries, and that, if it was shown that protection existed, he should be prepared to take measures to remove the injustice. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer concurred in that view, and therefore the only question really at issue was the point of protection, and this was confirmed by the present Secretary for India, who at the time of the last Indian Budget promised to eliminate from the duties everything

savouring of the nature of protection. With the object of dealing with the question, two Bills had been brought in by the Government of India, but he complained that this legislation went far beyond the necessities of the case. It dealt with the alleged evil of protection in regard to the complaint of Lancashire, but it went far beyond that and did an injustice to the people of India. It removed the excise duty from yarns and placed it upon woven goods—upon the manufactured article. The effect of this was to remove the grievance of Lancashire with regard to the finer counts, while it imposed injustice on the Bombay millowners, because they had to pay twice over on the stores used in their mills. But the Government of India, without any necessity, went further than this by reducing the duty on the finer counts from 5 per cent. to 3½ per cent. and thereby needlessly sacrified a large amount of revenue. As to the coarser counts, also, there was the object of removing all protective influence. That might be done by placing the Lancashire producer and the Bombay producer on the same level in either of two ways —by having neither import nor excise duties, or by having both import and excise duties on the coarser counts. The universal opinion in India had been in favour of having neither import nor excise duties on the coarser counts, so that no tax should be placed on such articles used by the poorer classes. But, without any sufficient reason, that wish was put aside, and an excise duty had been placed on the industries of India. The step had caused great indignation in India, and it was for this reason that he had brought the matter forward. The Government having gone, as he had said, beyond the necessities of the case, the responsibility rested upon them of showing to the House that they were justified in the course they had

adopted. It had been stated that Custom-house arrangements made it impossible to carry out the wishes of the people of India in the matter; but that could hardly be the fact, for the Government of Bombay had declared that there was no insuperable difficulty in remitting the duties on the coarser counts, and in 1878 greater difficulties of a similar character were successfully overcome. In 1878 the line tried to be drawn was at 30's, near the bulk of Manchester goods, so that the matter then was much more difficult to deal with, but it was grappled with successfully. Now the line proposed was 20's, and there is much less practical difficulty. Then there was another important point. The sole declared object of the rearrangement ot the duties was to get rid of protection. But the result was to create protection on a larger scale in favour of handlooms, and mills in Native States. These together consumed three-fifths of all the yarn used in India. He was a friend to handloom weavers and to Native States but from an economic point of view he must say that should not be given an unfair advantage. His main objection, however, was that the rearrangement relieved the richer and taxed the poorer. In the matter of food the poorer classes of India were very heavily taxed. There was no heavier tax known to the world than the salt tax, for the working man in India had to pay 40d. by way of duty for every one penny of value. Therefore he had to pay very heavily for his necessaries as regarded food, and it was not now the time to put a further tax upon his necessaries, that is, upon the wretched clothes he wore. It might be said that the amount was small, but then his means were small. The average income was 1½d. a day, and there was not much room for taxation out of that. Therefore he came back to his main contention, that,

whereas the Government had taken off 50 lakhs from the taxation of the finer clothes worn by the richer, they had done very wrong in putting 10 lakhs on the coarser cloths worn by the poorer, and he appealed to the noble lord by a stroke of the pen to remove that grievance, which would have a very beneficial effect throughout India. He believed the Secretary of State for India somewhat questioned the statement that the coarser cloths were worn exclusively by the poorer classes. He thought it stood to reason that the coarser and cheaper fabrics would be worn by the poorer classes, and that seemed to be the view taken by all the authorities. That was the opinion of the India Office when the right hon. gentleman the member for Wolverhampton was Secretary for India, and he did not know what further information had led the noble lord to an alteration of that opinion. It was the basis of the whole complaint that the coarser cloths were worn by the poorer people. The Bombay Government, which he regarded as the highest authority in this matter, referred to the duty as a burden of taxation to be borne by the poorer classes, and that view was supported by the native gentlemen in the Viceroy's Council. He thought it was a little fantastic to say that the poor people wore the more expensive and finer cloths. His contention was that this tax upon the poor was uncalled for and that it was very injurious, both to the people it affected and in the feeling it had produced throughout India. He had no wish that this should be a party motion at all, and he appealed for support to those hon. members on the other side who were acquainted with Indian matters. He regretted that his old friend Sir George Chesney was no longer in his place to raise his voice against this tax, as he did on a former occasion but there were other Anglo-Indian members still sitting in the

House. There was his hon. friend the member for Bethnal Green, who was a direct representative of India, and the hon. member for Cardiff, and, if he had been present he would have made his appeal to the hon. Baronet the member of Manchester, who was for a long time Governor of Bombay, and also his hon. friend the member for Central Hackney, who had had a long experience in India. He felt confident that those hon. members would be prepared to confirm what he said as to the strength of the feeling on this matter throughout India. Every representative association had put in its protest against what had been done. The Chambers of Commerce were at one with the Association of Millowners. It was a very remarkable thing that the Chamber of Commerce of Bombay should have taken this view so strongly, because it consisted entirely of gentlemen engaged in the import trade of cotton goods, and they pointed out that only two members of the body had any interest whatever in the Bombay mills. Public meetings had been held in different parts of India, and in every case the strongest possible protest had been sent in. He did not know what was the real feeling of the Government of India in this matter. They seemed to have changed a good deal from their original position, and he would like to ask the noble lord if he would explain how that conversion came about. He had read the Blue-book with very great care, and there was a curious hiatus between the important dispatch sent by the noble lord on the 5th of September last and the telegram from the Government of India of 16th of January, from which it appeared that the Government of India had found salvation from the Secretary of State's point of view. He should like to know if they could be favoured with the correspondence which took place between those dates. He

thought he might also safely appeal to the Lancashire members. He wished to make no attack whatever upon them for pressing their case as strongly as they could, but he would appeal to them to be satisfied with what they had got in this matter. They had received a very great concession in the remission of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. upon the import trade, and he would appeal to them not to oppose the proposal to remit the excise and import duties on the coarser counts. They now paid the same import as excise, and they had this advantage with regard to the double payment of taxation of stores. He really did not see why they should in any way oppose the removal on the import duties on the coarser fabrics. They had too, at present a monopoly in drills, which were not made in India at all. Therefore this concession would actually be a benefit to them so far as drills were concerned. They had also pointed out that they were anxious to manufacture more of the coarser materials. If they were successful in doing so, it would also benefit them if the duty was taken off. If the Lancashire members were agitating so strongly for the removal of these duties altogether, surely it was illogical for them to object to a portion of duties being removed. He also wished to appeal to the sentiment that was so forcibly put by the First Lord of the Admiralty when he pointed out how very unfortunate it would be if India and Lancashire should come into collision upon this matter. He did not wish to dilate upon the question of boy-cotting or of any hostile measures that might be taken in India, but it was a matter, he thought, that Lancashire should consider carefully. When they remembered that Japan, China, and America were running this country very hard in the matter of finer fabrics, it would be very unfortunate if

their customers in India were to take their custom to those countries instead of the Lancashire mills. He did not think this would be any sacrifice at all; but even if it were, it would be worth making in order to remove the feeling of indignation and to draw more closely the bonds between the people of this country and of India. He would appeal to the whole House, and remind them of what the late Viceroy said upon this subject of the financial treatment of India. Speaking in another place, he said: "There was never a moment when it is more necessary to counteract the growing impression that our financial policy in India is dictated by selfish considerations." This was a matter in which the people of India were exceedingly interested, and they would watch eagerly what the decision of that House would be. He trusted that decision would be in accordance with right and justice and humanity. (*Hear, hear.*)

INDIAN TROOPS AT SUAKIN.

[*Lord George Hamilton moved in the House of Commons on July* 6, 1896: "*That Her Majesty having directed a military expedition of her native forces charged upon the revenues of India to be despatched to Africa in aid of the Egyptian troops, this House consents that the ordinary pay of any troops so despatched, as well as the ordinary charges of any vessels belonging to the Government of India that may be employed in this expedition, which would have been charged upon the resources of India if such troops or vessels had remained in that country or seas adjacent, shall continue to be so chargeable: provided that if it shall become necessary to replace the troops or vessels so withdrawn by other vessels or native forces, then the expense of raising, maintaining, and*

providing such vessels and forces shall, in so far as may not be otherwise provided, be repaid out of any moneys which may be provided by Parliament for the purposes of the said expedition."]

Sir William Wedderburn was sorry the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, said he had made this a question of confidence, and not left his supporters to vote freely. The good name of the House and the country was involved, and, therefore, the pressure of party discipline should not have been brought to bear on any member to vote either one way or the other. The question of finality was also involved, for no one could suppose that a party vote would dispose of the matter. He had the honour of serving on the Royal Commission which had to deal, amongst other things, with the apportionment of the charges between England and India, and he felt the labours of that Commission would be very much aided by such a free discussion of this question in the House as could take place if no pressure were employed. He regarded both parties as sinners in respect to their dealings with India, but if anything the Tories had the better record, and therefore it did not lay with the Liberals to call the Tory kettle black. There were five important precedents, of which three were bad; the cases of Abyssinia, of Egypt in 1882, and of the Sudan in 1885. These were cases in which the recommendations and protests of the Government of India were set aside by the Liberal Government. There were two good precedents, those of Malta and of Mombassa, and they were both made by a Conservative Government. It appeared to him it was not too late even now for the Government to allow the House a free hand in this matter. When the noble Lord decided to wait until the Government of India had an opportunity of putting forward their own view of

the case, he thought the noble Lord was building a golden bridge for his own retreat. (*Hear, hear.*) Having already two good precedents, it would be well if he would make a third; and if the Government were not willing to change the recommendation they had made, they might, at all events, leave the responsibility of a decision to the free judgment of the House. There were two important declarations made by two Conservative Secretaries of State. In 1887, Lord Cross laid down the doctrine of the veto to be exercised by the Government of India; and again the present Secretary of State laid down on the 30th of June last, the excellent doctrine of reciprocity between India and England. The noble Lord's three rules must recommend themselves to all sides of the House; but on one point, perhaps, they did not come up to the full extent of reciprocity. His first proposition was that, when temporary and urgent need arose, assistance should be promptly given by either party; but the reciprocity stopped if the two conditions existed under the second and the third rules, for this reason that the objects for which an Indian contingent was required was generally temporary and emergent, whereas the objects for which British troops were required in India were of a more permanent kind. Therefore, in order to give the Indian people advantage from this reciprocity, we must make an allowance with regard to British troops serving in India, although they remained from year to year. If that point was conceded and complete reciprocity established between the two Governments everything would be settled on a fairly equitable basis, and it would then not be necessary to consider very carefully this difficult question of what were special interests because it would not matter much, for whatever the decision was it would apply equally to both parties. At

present the Indian Government made enormous payments every year for British troops, not only for the use of them in India, but also for the transport and training of them. If an account was taken for the past it would be found, however much might be charged against India, there would be a large balance in her favour. The suppression of the Indian Mutiny was a matter specially affecting the welfare of England. British supremacy in India was vital to the British nation. Yet on the suppression of the Mutiny not a penny was paid by England and unfortunate India was saddled with a debt of about £46,000,000. It was said that India would be put to no additional expense, and would, therefore, lose nothing by the proposed arrangement; but allowance ought to be made for the effect of these requisitions on the military budget of India; it would be necessary to make provisions for the average annually required for such contingents. It might be that Indian troops were willing to serve in other parts of the world, but it must be remembered that Suakin was a very unhealthy place, and the liability of Indian troops to be sent to unhealthy climates made recruiting in India more costly and more difficult. Another point to be remembered was the difficulty the Viceroy would be placed in in his own Legislative Council when he had to bring forward proposals for granting money for purposes regarded as illegitimate by the whole public opinion of India. What a position it was to put a Viceroy in to compel him, in the face of his own Despatch, to assure the Council that the payment could properly be passed by the representatives of the people of India. It had been pointed out that since 1892 a different complexion had been given to the Viceroy's Council, and that there were in the Council men who in a great measure did represent the people of India. The

Viceroy himself, his Finance Minister, and the Military Member would have a bad quarter of an hour when they brought forward these proposals and, against their own declared convictions, proceeded to force them through by means of their mechanical majority. He earnestly urged the Government to reconsider their decision.

THE MAHARAJAH OF JHALAWAR.

[*Mr. Herbert Roberts moved on July* 21, 1896. *I beg to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House*—(*oh, oh*)—*for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely,* "*The treatment by the Indian Government of the Maharaja of Jhalawar and the unsatisfactory character of the enquiry into his case.*"]

Sir William Wedderburn seconded the Motion. He said he wished to refer chiefly to two points, namely, the importance of this matter and the necessity of giving the Raja an impartial trial. It had been said by the political officers that these proceedings were being very closely watched all over Rajputana. But he went further and said that the proceedings were being watched by every Ruling Chief throughout India, not only with interest, but with anxiety and alarm. How could that fail to be the case when they saw one of their number deprived of his throne and exiled from his dominions, not for any maladministration proved in public enquiry, but upon the secret reports of the Political Agent who was on bad terms with the Prince himself. Our position in India depended very much on the goodwill of the native Chiefs. At the time of the Mutiny they were our sheet-anchor, and those

who took an interest in our Imperial fortunes should be especially careful to remove all causes of unrest and alarm among the native Chiefs of India. He did not say there were not cases in which the Government of India ought to interfere—cases in which maladministration and tyranny were proved. In such cases it was not only the right but the duty of the Indian Government to interfere. He agreed entirely with the view that it was to the paramount Power alone that the inhabitants of native States should look for protection against misgovernment and tyranny; but what he contended was that in this case no tyranny and no oppression had been proved against the Chief in question. He maintained that this was a personal quarrel, and that the charges of maladministration were somewhat of an afterthought. It was the misfortune of our political system in India that in every native State there were two kings, the Raja on the one hand, who gathered around him the supporters of the "ins"; and the Political Agent, on the other hand, who gathered around him every faction who might be termed the "outs." The only story the Government of India heard was the story told by the Political Agent, whose only source of information was the faction whose very object it was to discredit the Raja. His proposition was that this Prince had not had an impartial trial, because all the information on which the Government of India had acted was one-sided information, obtained from a tainted source. Such being the case, he was entitled to a fair and impartial hearing before the very serious step of deposing him was taken. The correspondence showed that there was no real popular discontent. All the signs of popular discontent were wanting. What were the charges of misgovernment? The only thing he saw charged in the nature of maladministration had refer-

ence to the revenue settlement, and the remarkable part of that accusation was, not that the Raja had taken too much from his subjects, but the statement of the agent absolutely was that he did not take enough. He only wished that the people of British India could make that charge against their Government. Another complaint was that the Raja cut down expenses. Again, he could only wish that the Government of India would do the same thing, and so get rid of a great deal of objectionable taxation. The reports of the political officer did not lay any great stress on acts of maladministration. The Government of India practically gave away the whole case by saying that the question before them had been not so much specific acts of maladministration by the Raja himself as his attitude towards the British Government. The whole case had arisen out of a quarrel between the political agency and the Raja, and what was asked was that there should be an impartial enquiry. He had no special knowledge of this particular chief but it was in the interests of all the chiefs, and because he believed there was no more important thing for our rule in India than to cultivate and retain the goodwill and friendship of the Native Chiefs that he seconded this motion.

THE SCRUTINY OF INDIAN ACCOUNTS.

[*On the motion to go into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts, on August* 13, 1896.]

Sir W. Wedderburn said that he was hopeless of any benefit arising from the Indian Budget Debate under the present system, or rather want of system. (*Hear, hear.*) Intricate accounts involving an expenditure of nearly Rx. 100,000,000 were placed upon the table, and the House had no guidance in deciding whether the explanations of the Secretary of State were satisfactory or otherwise. The difficulty of the case was increased by the fact that the Secretary of State's "Explanatory Memorandum" had been only two days in the hands of members. Under such circumstances it was impossible that in the course of a few hours any profitable discussion could take place regarding Indian finance. He therefore asked the indulgence of the House in order that he might place before it a humble suggestion having for its object to obtain, in future years, a more systematic and effectual scrutiny of Indian Accounts. The amendment that stood in his name was as follows: "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the question, in order to add instead thereof the words—'With a view to the effectual discharge of its existing duty in respect of the finances of India, this House is of opinion that the East India Accounts should each year be examined and reported on by a Select Committee of the House, thus *mutatis mutandis* assimilating the practice as regards Indian Accounts, to that followed, by means of the Public Accounts Committee, in respect of the Accounts of the United Kingdom." It appeared to him that this was a simple proposal, and at

the same time a moderate one. It proposed no new duty, and only indicated the way in which an existing and accepted duty might be properly performed. (*Hear, hear.*) It merely proposed that in dealing with Indian finances they should exercise the same reasonable care that they exercised with regard to their own. A trustee was required to give as careful an attention to trust funds as to his own property. But in the present case there was a painful contrast between the promptitude and rigour with which the House looked after its own finances, and the indifference with which it treated those of India. For weeks all items of British expenditure were minutely debated, while the complete control of Parliament was secured by the action of the Public Accounts Committee. On the other hand one day at the fag end of the Session was grudgingly given to Indian finance, and no steps were taken to make the parliamentary control anything but illusory. It was a bad object-lesson for India, who complained that they neither gave her a voice in her own affairs nor would attend to them themselves. The British system of control had gradually perfected itself since the passing of the Exchequer Audit Act, 1866, and in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee for the current year testimony was borne to the great benefits arising from the arrangements now in force. Referring to the excellent services of Sir C. Ryan, the retiring Comptroller and Accountant-General, the report reviewed the past history of the Committee and noticed the admirable results, as evidenced by the Public Accounts, of the arrangements introduced by the Exchequer and Audit Departments Act of 1866. The striking contrast, from the point of view of financial regularity, between the period antecedent and the period subsequent to that measure showed it to have been,

in its peculiar field, an "epoch-making" statute. It appeared that in the first nine years after the passing of the Act the financial irregularities brought to light averaged twenty-five yearly; but during the nine years up to 1894-5 this number was reduced to two yearly, and during the last two years all irregularities had ceased. But the Commlttee pointed out that the improvement was greater than that shown by mere statistics. "An examination of the Auditors reports will," the Committee observed, "show, what the experience of your Committee confirms, viz., a remarkable diminution of controversy on first principles and the disappearance to a great degree of impatience of scrutiny, a sure and honourable testimony to the value of the work." If such solid benefits arose from the labours of a Select Commititte of the House in dealing with British accounts, why should not the same benefits, *mutatis mutandis*, be extended to India? Of course the system of Indian finance differed from that of the United Kingdom, but he believed that if a Committee was appointed an arrangement could be devised adapted to the requirements of Indian methods. He felt confident that to accomplish this was not beyond the wit of the noble lord, the Secretary of State, who would thus remove the reproach of neglecting the golden rule. (*Hear, hear.*) It would be for the wisdom of Parliament to decide how best the Committee could do its work, so as to secure for the House a reasonable understanding of Indian finance, and a reasonable control over this most important department of Imperial affairs. For the moment the rise of exchange, over which we had no control, had saved the Indian Exchequer from its most serious difficulties. A fall in exchange, over which we equally had no control, would plunge the Indian Treasury into its former embarrass-

ments, and he would remind the House that financial embarrassment in India meant increased taxation, and perhaps a demand on the Imperial Treasury. The control over British finance now so smoothly worked by the Public Accounts Committee had not been devised in a day, but had been gradually perfected by experience. He noticed that the system had first been applied to the navy so long ago as 1832, to the army in 1847, and it was not till 1866 that it was extended to all grants in Supply. Similarly, if the House should be pleased to appoint a Committee to deal with the Indian accounts, he had no doubt that such Committee, with characteristic British business capacity, would work out for itself a practical method of performing its duties towards the House. They would look to the noble lord who had long experience of Indian affairs in the House for guidance in this important matter. But he (Sir William) had given much thought to this subject, and he might perhaps be allowed to make a practical suggestion as to the direction in which such a Committee might most advantageously work. He would suggest that the principal materials for the labours of the Committee might be provided by a special report on the financial condition of India, supplied each year by the Government of India, such report being based on the debates on the Indian Budget in the Viceroy's Council. The House was aware that the Council contained a certain proportion of non-official members nominated by the Viceroy, and under Lord Cross's Act of 1892 certain public bodies were allowed to recommend a few members for nomination, thus giving voice to a certain extent to outside public opinion on Indian finance. The debates, therefore, in the Viceroy's Legislative Council would give the Committee valuable and definite matter for consideration, and if, under the

Viceroy's rules of business, the non-official members were invited to move amendments and decide upon them, distinct issues would be provided for the Committee to examine and report upon to the House. The proposed annual report of the Government of India would, of course come through the India Office with the views of the Secretary of State in Council, and it would be received early in the Session, so that the Select Committee would have abundant leisure for its consideration, and it might be hoped that the influence of an important Committee of this kind would induce the Government of the day to bring on the debate on Indian finance at a reasonably early period of the Session. Such was a brief outline of his scheme, which he would gladly lay more in detail before the noble lord. In answer to his question in the House a few days ago the noble lord expressed an opinion unfavourable to the appointment of a Select Committee on Indian finance. But he thought this unfavourable opinion was in great measure based on a misunderstanding of the proposal —a very natural misunderstanding, as in the limits of a question, the particulars of the proposal could not be set forth. The two main objections raised by the noble lord were that the proposed enquiry would seriously interfere with the administrative work in India, and would entail large expense. No doubt these objections were based on the supposition that it was proposed rigidly to follow the procedure of the Public Accounts Committee, and make the duty mainly one of appropriation audit. As he had already explained, that was not the intention of the present proposal. No doubt there was in India an appropriation audit, but it was one entirely different in character and effect from that in England. In England the appropriation audit was of the highest possible importance, being the

machinery by which Parliament exercised its financial control over the Executive, and especially the Treasury. In India, the appropriation audit was merely an arrangement by which the Executive controlled its subordinate departments; it was of little use, and of no constitutional importance whatever. As it was not proposed that the Committee should carry out an appropriation audit for India, the difficulty suggested by the noble lord disappeared, because departmental officers would not be called from their administrative duties in India, and no expense would be incurred. He would no longer detain the House. It was for the House to decide how a difficult, but manifest and admitted, duty towards India could best be performed. No one considered that the present state of things was creditable. It might not be possible to do complete justice to India in this matter. But that was not a reason for doing nothing. They might make an effort and do their best. No one could do more than that. (*Cheers.*)

Latter on the same day the following speech was made:—

Sir W. Wedderburn thought the noble lord was quite entitled to congratulation on the Budget he had been able to submit, but at the same time he thought that although the surplus that was shown was very satisfactory for the Treasury, there were certain figures in the account which showed that the condition of affairs was not so satisfactory for the Indian taxpayer. He would specially draw the noble lord's attention to the peculiar use of two words in these accounts—namely, improvement and deterioration. These two words were used solely from the point of view of the interests of the Treasury. They were used in a sense exactly contrary to the sense in which they would be used if applied to the financial position of India. Under the head of improvement was shown new taxation. New

taxation did not improve the financial position of India. It showed a deterioration in the condition of the people. If he drew his savings out of the strong box and put them into current expenditure, that was not an improvement in his financial position. Similarly if a shop-keeper took money out of his strong box and put it into his till, that was deterioration, not improvement. Therefore, it was because these accounts looked only to the interests of the Treasury and not to those of the taxpayer, that he contended that in many respects they produced a false impression. He could not, therefore, accept the comparisons made in these statements, and he would instead give a comparison between two years including a space of 12 years, which would enable the House to see whether the condition of India was improving or not. When the year 1884-85 was compared with the year 1896-97, it would be found that the natural increase of revenue from the development of resources was about Rx. 9,000,000, and the saving in the commercial service debt Rx. 1,000,000, making a total improvement of Rx. 10,000,000. With regard to deterioration, he found an increase in the land revenue from enhanced assessments of Rx. 500,000, new taxation Rx.6,000,000 loss on opium revenue Rx. 1,500,000 increase in civil services Rx. 7,500,000, increase in military services Rx. 8,500.000, reduction in Famine Grant Rx. 1,000,000 making a total deterioration of Rx. 25,000,000, or after deducting Rx. 10,000,000 for improvements, a net deterioration in 12 years of Rx. 15,000,000. The right hon. gentleman the member for Wolverhampton had laid great stress upon the question of exchange, but as regarded the present rate of exchange, so far from its being a burden now, there was actually an increase of Rx. 1,500,000, so that that bugbear of

exchange would no longer be put forward and they might look much more to the constant increase in civil and military expenditure. He thanked the hon. gentleman, the member for the Radcliffe Division of Lancashire, for what he had said about the salt tax and the willingness of the people of Lancashire to see the needs of the great masses of the people of India relieved before the question of import duties was touched. He recognised that feeling gratefully, and he only trusted that by careful economy, not only the salt tax might be reduced, but the import duties entirely abolished. He might mention to the noble lord the Secretary of State that the figures he had given were given according to the way in which they were used in a very interesting article in the *Daily Chronicle* that morning, and the statements there were in accordance with the mode of reckoning the expenditure and revenue which had been often placed before the India Office.

THE CONDITION OF THE INDIAN MASSES.

[*The debate on the Address was resumed on January 26th. 1897 by Sir W. Wedderburn who moved as an amendment, to add the following words at the end of the Address—And we humbly pray that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to direct that a full and independent enquiry shall forthwith be made into the condition of the masses of the Indian people, with a view to ascertain the causes by reason of which they are helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence.*]

He said that he was sure that India would feel grateful for the expressions of sympathy contained in the Queen's speech, and for the assurances that the State would do all in its power to save life. But he felt it his duty to mov

his amendment, because the Government did not seem fully to realise the nature and magnitude of the calamity. The methods of State relief adopted, sought to mitigate the outward symptoms, but they did not tend to remove the cause of the evil, which was the extreme poverty of the masses. So far from removing this evil, the expenditure on famine relief aggravated it. He did not know how much would be spent, whether three millions, or six millions, or three times six millions. But where would this money come from? It would not come down from the clouds. It would have to be raised by the taxation of the masses; the dying would be fed at the expense of the hungry survivors, making the survivors more destitute, more heavily burdened, and less able to resist hunger and disease. Also he felt it his duty to place prominently before the House the Indian view of the calamity and its proper remedies. These remedies were not heroic ones, but they proceeded from an intimate knowledge of the condition and habits of the people. If it were asked from what sources Indian public opinion could be learnt, he would say, from his friend Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, a true well-wisher of British rule from the Indian Press, and from the resolutions of the Indian National Congress, which gave voice to the public feeling in India. The view held in India with regard to the famine might be briefly expressed in three simple propositions. The first was, that the excessive mortality in time of famine was owing to the chronic destitution of the masses, who existed precariously on the verge of subsistence. He hoped that the noble lord, the Secretary of State for India, would not deny the truth of this proposition. It was true that in the Queen's Speech, the cause of the famine was declared to be the "failure of the autumn rains," but he assumed

that was only stated as the immediate cause—the last straw which broke the camel's back—and that the noble lord looked farther back for the causes of the rayat's feeble powers of resistance. How, indeed, could the proposition be denied? For it stood to reason that the population must be living from hand to mouth, if, on account of the failure of one harvest, they died of hunger, not by hundreds and thousands, but by hundreds of thousands, and millions. If, however, the extreme destitution of the people was denied, he trusted that the house would call for enquiry, and insist on this issue being fairly tried, as between official optimism on the one hand, and unanimous Indian public opinion on the other. His second proposition was, that mortality from famine would practically be prevented if the rayat possessed a store of food, money, or credit sufficient to tide over one failure of harvest. This proposition seemed to be self-evident. For men did not die from hunger out of mere perversity, but because they had neither food in their houses to eat, nor money to buy it, nor credit to borrow it. As a class the rayat had not only nothing, but much less than nothing, being hopelessly in debt to the village money-lender. He remembered that in the early part of his service in India every rayat, however poor, had a little store of grain put away in a store-room under his house, sufficient to last his family two or three years. But that was now impossible, for we had set up debt courts upon the European model, and these little stores were swept away by the bailiffs in execution of decrees. The first step towards helping the rayat was to release him from this bondage and the money-lender. His third and last proposition was a more hopeful one, and it was this, that if certain simple remedies were applied in the village administration, the rayat would not only possess

a sufficient store, but might become comparatively wealthy. In approaching the question of the rayat's condition the important fact must be borne in mind, that, although India was at present a very poor country, she possessed almost boundless possibilities of wealth. She had a fertile soil, an unfailing sun, an abundance of labour, skilful and cheap. All she wanted was working capital. If the rayat had that in sufficiency at resonable rates, to provide himself with water and manure, he would turn all India into a garden. He (Sir W. Wedderburn) had seen this operation going on near Poona, where land that produced a crop of millet worth perhaps ten shillings an acre was, by irrigation and manure, made to produce a crop of sugarcane worth £30 an acre as it stood on the ground. And such was the skill of the rayat that whatever crop he produced, whether rice, indigo, opium, tea, wheat or tobacco, it in the end always came to the top of the market. From these three propositions would be seen the nature of the enquiry which he asked for by the amendment. What he desired was a village enquiry, practical and definite, in order to ascertain in detail the condition of the rayat, to learn the causes of his poverty, and to apply remedies to the evils from which he was suffering. The enquiry he wanted was a village enquiry,.because in the rural villages were included 80 per cent. of the population, and because the village community was the microcosm of all India; and if they could discover the means to make one village prosperous they held the clue to make all India prosperous. For such an enquiry no Imperial Commission was necessary. The local administration might be directed to select typical villages in each Province, and to appoint a Committee to make a thorough diagnosis of their condition. The Committee must be representative, consisting of Europeans and Indians, offi-

cials and non-officials; such as were appointed to the Deccan Rayats Commission 20 years ago. Their investigation should be of a microscopic kind, to detect the microbes which blighted the rayat's prosperity. He believed that the microbes would be found to be the usurious money-lender (who should be replaced by Agricultural banks); the Civil Court (which should be replaced by popular Conciliation and Arbitration Courts); and the harsh and rigid collection of the revenue (which should be replaced by methods suited to the habits and wishes of the rayat). If these simple remedies were adopted he believed that famine would be rendered impossible. In making these proposals he did not desire to impute any blame to the noble lord, the Secretary of State for India; but he had carefully studied the condition of the rayat for thirty or forty years, and in this great crisis he desired to place the results of his experience at the disposal of the noble lord and of the House. He earnestly trusted his proposals would receive sympathetic consideration. (*Hear, hear.*)

THE PROBLEM OF THE INDIAN RAYAT.

[*On the motion to go into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts, on August 5, 1897.*]

Sir W. Wedderburn said that this was the one appointed opportunity in the year for discussing the general affairs of India, and he much regretted that it had been fixed for a date when the House was practically broken up, and also that it had fallen at a time of some anxiety in India in several directions, so that it was difficult to discuss affairs as freely as was desirable on account of the fear in any way of embarrassing the Government. He referred especially to events at Malakand, regarding which

much might be said, and perhaps ought to be said. He felt it however his duty to say a few words upon what after all was the great central question for India, as well as for all other countries; he meant the condition of the masses. All other matters, however important they might appear, were by comparison accidental and transitory. But upon the condition of the masses depended the success and safety of our rule. There was a pathetic proverb in India which said that the worst form of rebellion was the rebellion of the belley. And he besought the people of this ccuntry not to lose sight of this central point of the whole situation. If the masses were contented and prosperous, all would be well. Now in India, in speaking of the masses, they meant the rayats or peasant cultivators who, with their belongings, comprised some 80 per cent. of the whole population. They lived grouped together in rural village communities, of which there were about half a million in the whole of India. And his contention had always been that the way to get at the truth regarding the rayat's past history, his present condition, and future prospects, was to make a careful and detailed village enquiry, learning from each individual rayat his experiences, and what were his complaints, and what form of relief he most required. Unhappily they had reason to belive that the rayats as a class were in a condition of deep destitution. Had they possessed a reasonable store of food, of money, or of credit, they would have been able to tide over at least one failure of harvest. But the experience of the famine showed that they were not able to do this. As a rule they not only possessed nothing, but much less than nothing—being hopelessly indebted to the money-lenders. He therefore last January, as an amendment to the Address, had pressed the noble lord the Secretary of State for India to grant

a village enquiry of this kind by local representative Committees, in the several provinces; pointing out that this did not involve a Commission from England, or any disturbance of famine work, and that the cost would be quite nominal. The noble lord had not shown himself altogether averse to enquiry. He had been so good as to say that he (Sir William) had advanced some practical suggestions, and even that (with certain qualifications) he had made a sensible speech. As regards the proposed enquiry the Secretary of State had said that he agreed that the opportunity of the famine ought not to be allowed to pass without taking every opportunity to enquire into and ascertain the best methods of protecting the people of India from the recurrence of similar calamities. This sounded hopeful. But he (Sir William) feared that the enquiries contemplated by the noble lord were purely official enquiries in the ordinary departmental routine, and from such investigations drastic reforms such as were required could hardly be expected. The fact was, the existing official system was chiefly to blame for the rayat's difficulties. Upon this point he offered himself as a witness, as he had made the rayat his special study for the last 30 years and more. He also thought he was an impartial witness, for he began his enquiries with all the prepossession in favour of the official system natural to a member of the Civil Service. But he gradually and reluctantly came to the conclusion that a great portion of the land revenue system, though good in theory and well intentioned, was not suited to the condition of the rayat. In now renewing, therefore, his proposals for enquiry, he had sent to every member of the House a statement showing the facts and figures upon which his conclusions were based. The conclusions were that there were three main

causes of the rayat's distress: (1) The excessive revenue demand. The orders of the Home Government were that the revenue demand should not be a rack-rent, but should leave with the cultivator the wages of labour, the interest on capital, and half the true rent. But it was officially admitted that compliance with this instruction was practically unknown in India; the Government demand trenched upon interest on capital and wages of labour; nevertheless in spite of this admission the Government demand was being continually enhanced, up to 100 per cent. in some villages, and even 1,000 per cent. in certain individual holdings. The second main cause of the rayat's distress was (ii) the harsh and rigid mode of collection, which exacted punctual payment of a fixed annual cash assessment, thus placing upon the rayat the burden of uncertain seasons, a burden he was not able to bear, so that he was driven to the money-lender; and the third cause was (iii) the establishment of debt—courts on the European model, which had armed the money-lender with all the power of the Empire, and enabled him to reduce the rayat to the lowest depth of serfdom. These facts were all painfully familiar to the rayats, and were well known throughout India. But unfortunately they were not known to the House or to the British public. The troubles thus produced were capable of a remedy, and in each case he had indicated the direction in which the remedy should be sought, by a cautious return to the old native custom. Further, he had matured a scheme for rescuing the rayat from the toils of the money-lender by means of Agricultural Banks. This scheme had received general approval, and was cordially supported by the Viceroy of India in Council. But it was vetoed by the India Office. He would not weary the House by going more into details, but he

would claim that he had established a case for an enquiry on the lines asked for in the amendment From his personal experience he firmly believed that by this simple and easy method much might be done to improve the condition of the masses, thereby spreading contentment throughout the land. (*Hear*, *hear*). He desired to add a few words regarding the present situation in India and the proposal contained in the first part of the amendment. At the last great famine, 20 years ago, the mortality was estimated by the Famine Commissioners at 5½ millions. They had no means of knowing what the mortality was in the present famine. But the area affected was greater than on the former occasion, and in spite of the praiseworthy and well-organised efforts on the part of the Government, the suffering and death must be very great, and must continue for several months more, even if favourable rains produced a crop which could be reaped in October. In addition to the famine had come the plague, and in some parts the earthquake, so that men's minds were nearly distracted, their hearts failing them from fear. Under these circumstances he felt sure that the House would gladly send them a kindly message of sympathy. Especially such an expression of sympathy seemed called for when they contrasted the exuberant prosperity of this country with the present unhappy condition of the masses in India. And further he would most earnestly deprecate any unnecessary measures of severity towards the people of India in any shape or form. The wise doctor was very forgiving to a suffering patient. His gentleness would not be mistaken for weakness. He would not be angry for anything the sufferer did in the paroxysm of his fever. On the contrary, he would only redouble his efforts to remove the cause of his delirium. Similarly he (Sir William) would appeal to the

noble lord the Secretary of State for India to be very merciful towards the Indian people, who were sick almost unto death. The noble lord had spoken the other day of an iron hand in a velvet glove. But under the existing grievous circumstances the hand should not be of iron. What was needed was not an iron hand but a human hand, strong and kindly, ready to help the weak and raise those that were fallen. As regarded events at Poona, he thought the matter had been exaggerated. He believed that it would be found that the assasinations were isolated crimes unconnected with any widespread conspiracy. Doubtless there were everywhere in India certain elements of danger, but there were greater elements of safety. The party of constitutional reform known as the Indian National Congress made it its business to meet the dangers and assuage them, as far as it could, by having everything open so as to avoid secret conspiracy, to mitigate race hatreds, and to see that all respected the religion of others. The Congress party had three great principles. The first was that all its actions should be based on the stability and prosperity of British rule; the second that all its methods should be open and above board; and the third that its action should be strictly constitutional and law-abiding. If any movement was not in accordance with these three great principles, the Congress would have nothing to say to it. The Congress had two main objects—to prevent secret conspiracies, and to bring every grievance to the notice of the Government, also respectfully to make representations to the Government for the redress of grievances, because it believed that by the redress of grievances the people would be rendered both prosperous and contented, and this was the only way to make the British Government strong and based on a good foundation. There were two elements of

safety—the principal one that the great body of the people, especially the educated classes, believed that it was only under the stability of the British Government that any happy future for India was possible. He feared very much that measures might be taken from want of thorough appreciation of the situation and sympathy with these poor suffering people who, he was willing to admit, might in their frenzy do things they might afterwards be sorry for. If the police were not trustworthy it was dangerous to put them in authority over the people at large, and all oppressive measures were dangerous because they had to be carried out by an organisation not in itself trust worthy. If oppressive police measures were taken they would paralyse and alienate those who wished the British Government well, and would drive discontent inwards, and that was the way the powers of the party of violence were strengthened. (*Hear, hear.*) He earnestly warned the Secretary for India to be careful. No one could doubt that, as regarded the Poona affair, the great body of the people of India, especially the educated classes, regarded the assassinations with the utmost detestation and horror. The natives of India were a humane, gentle race, and in the vast country of India assasinations were quite unknown. Those who, like himself, had lived in India had felt more safe there than in London. In India they lived with doors and windows open. In India they were not afraid of burglars, and if a man wanted to send his wife and children across the country he put them in charge of a native guard, and knew that they would be safe. The natives of India were a gentle, trustworthy, and humane race, and he could not understand why the Anglo-Indian press so constantly wrote against them and insulted them. What was there to be gained by making the natives unfriendly? The

natives of India abominated odious crimes such as those that had taken place, as they were the chief sufferers by such crimes if the Government were driven to measures of severity. These crimes were hateful to them because they prevented the possibility of the peaceful, gradual, and constitutional reforms on which their hearts were set, and which they regarded as necessary for the future welfare of the country. He therefore trusted the Secretary for India would hold the balance steadily, maintain a judicial position, and not be the apologist of the India Office or the Executive, but as the representative of her Majesty hold the balance evenly and hear the weaker side. The official class in India had all the power in their hands. It was the people who were weak, and they looked to the Secretary for India to be their protector. Let him give them an impartial hearing, and treat them kindly and leniently. The wise course for the Indian Government to pursue was to preserve a firm but humane attitude, conciliating the good will of the great body of the people whose interests were identical with those of a just and kindly Government. And in this connection he might say that it was not even now too late to extend to India some boons in connection with the Jubilee. (*Hear, hear.*) Such a gracious act would do much to calm down the unavoidable unrest produced by such an accumulation of misfortunes; whether such concessions took the form of a further expansion of the Legislative Councils, or a legislative limitation of the Government revenue demand, as an encouragement to the suffering cultivators. Confidence beget confidence. And what he desired was to see British rule recognised not as an alien domination but as the National Government, giving contentment to the masses, and free scope to the aspirations of those who hoped to raise India to a noble place among the nations of the world. (*Cheers*).

THE CONDITION OF INDIA.

[*Sir W. Wedderburn rose to move the following amendment to be added to the Address on February* 17, 1898:—*And we humbly pray that your Majesty, looking to the miseries patiently endured by the Indian people from famine, plague, poverty, and other afflictions during the past year, will graciously direct that special forbearance be shown towards them and that careful enquiry be made into their present condition in order to restore confidence among the suffering masses, and thus prepare the way for healing measures tending to bring back peace and prosperity.*]

He said that the occurrences beyond the North West frontier had received full discussion, but it appeared to him that the internal condition of India was at present a matter of even graver anxiety. He thought that for the present the external question had been settled—not by the arguments of orators, but by the logic of facts. The people of this country now knew, and the Government themselves knew, that the policy of agression, and of disregard of the rights of others, had been a disastrous failure. (*Hear, hear.*) When he listened to the glowing periods of the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and his ingenious eulogy of the Forward Policy, and compared it with the bloodshed and ruin which had resulted, it made him think of the Dead Sea fruit, beautiful outside, but dust and ashes to the teeth. A policy not founded on righteousness was a mere white sepulchre—fair without, but within filled with dead men's bones and all uncleanness. He proposed to deal only with the internal affairs of India, and he only

eferred to frontier matters for one reason. That was because he thought it necessary to draw attention to one point of Russian policy, a point which had not been dwelt on in the debate, but which had a direct bearing on the internal condition of India. The point was this, that in all their schemes for an attack upon India the Russians depended mainly upon help from within. Their only real hope of succss was that while the "thin red line" confronted them on the border, there would be a rising of the population behind, which would cut us off from our base, and overwhelm us by its mere weight. On the other hand if the people of India were prepared to support the British Government, as they did even in the darkest times of the Mutiny, they would form our ultimate line of defence, a line of defence which could not be broken down. (*Hear, hear.*) The feeling and attitude of the people might be our greatest danger, or it might be our greatest safety. In former times they heard a great deal about the "key of India." At one time it was supposed to be at Herat, for some time, he thought, at Merv, then in London, then at Kandahar. But it was at none of these places, far less at Chitral or at Malakand. The "key of India" was to be found in the contentment and prosperity of the people of India. (*Cheers.*) That key had been securely held by the Marquis of Ripon when he was Viceroy of India, and it would be an ill-day for this country and for India when that key was let drop or thrown away from heedlessness or misunderstanding. Let them not deceive themselves. This was a question of the very existence of our Indian Empire. But he did not wish to appeal to fears. He desired rather to appeal to the justice and prudence and humanity of the Government and of that House. During the past year almost every possible calamity

had befallen the Indian people—famine, plague, war and earthquake. Unfortunately also their sufferings were aggravated by the very measures taken for their relief. These measures, such as plague segregation, were necessary and well-intentioned, but they involved fresh hardships by invading domestic privacy, which to Orientals was almost dearer than life itself. The people were thus distracted and almost driven to despair. Under these circumstances words and acts of sympathy were sorely needed, to soothe the minds of the people, and encourge them to bear up under their afflictions. (*Cheers*). Anger against them and severity were quite out of place. He therefore deeply regretted that severe measures of repression had been adopted by the authorities, and that still more stringent measures were being prepared. This severity was a new departure of a serious kind, and he would beseech the Government to pause, to give the people another chance. In any case he would ask them to bear in mind the sufferings of the people, and not to exercise more severity than was obsolutely unavoidable. With the permission of the House he would read a few lines from a letter he had just receivedfrom an old friend of his, a retired Indian Judge, who after a long and distinguished career, was devoting the remainder of his days to works of religion and charity. This was what he said of the condition of the people, speaking not in anger but in sorrow: "The times here are very dark. The people have suffered fearfully. Above all the Government has changed its character. It is not the same British Government which I have known all my life and which I served so long. I do not know how long this will last. But mark the words of an old man—this will do no good to your rule or to India. Not even during the Mutiny were things so

bad as they have been in the Deccan during the last year." These were the words of a faithful servant and friend of the British Government, and he (Sir William) believed that they were strictly true. (*Hear, hear.*) These measures of repression, directed against freedom of speech and the liberty of the press, would do no good to our rule in India. They chiefly affected the educated classes and the motive for imposing them arose from a complete misunderstanding of the feelings and objects of those classes. If the House would bear with him he would point out certain facts within his personal knowledge, going to prove two propositions: 1st. That the educated classes were firmly attached to British rule by the solid conviction that with it was bound up the only hope of a happy future for India ; and 2nd. That the repressive measures were a mistake because they struck at our best friends and that a policy of sympathy and forbearance was both safe and beneficial. The Hon. member for West Edinburgh had pointed out how difficult was for the Secretary of State for India to learn the real facts and to maintain and impartial control, especially in questions where official interest were directly concerned. Recently in a very important matter, relating to the attitude of the wild frontier tribes, the noble lord had been misled by his official informants. He had been assured that these tribes welcomed the military occupation of the mountain strongholds. He now knew that this was a delusion which had resulted in much disaster. Would the noble lord not take warning from this unhappy experience. (*Hear, hear.*) The central fact with reference to the tribes beyond the frontier was their passionate love of independence. The central fact with reference to the educated classes in India was their solid attachment to British rule. (*Cheers.*) To think other-

wise, to suppose that the educated classes desired to upset, or even to weaken Bristish rule, was a delusion; and to act upon this delusion by attacks upon these classes must inevitably lead to very unhappy results. Educated Indians were very intelligent—no one doubted that—and they knew perfectly well that India could not stand alone, and that the only alternative to British rule was Russian rule, or the still worse fate of anarchy. They therefore clung to British rule; they had adopted it as their national Government; and their only desire was to make it strong in the approval and affection of the people. If they criticised Government measures it was because they wished to let the Government know the feelings of the people, and to warn it if there was danger ahead. (*Hear, hear.*) A foreign Government must always be acting with insufficient knowledge. They were driving along a dark and unknown road, and the man who warned them of an obstacle or a pitfall was a friend and not an enemy, and should be treated accordingly. When he assured the House that educated Indians were to be trusted, it might be asked with what authority he spoke, and he would reply that he had been for many years on terms of intimate confidence with their leaders, and the views above stated faithfully expressed their feelings. (*Cheers.*) He and his family before him had served the Indian Government since the beginning of the century, and, whatever might be said in the heat of controversy, he did not suppose that any Hon. member believed that he had at heart anything but the welfare and prosperity of their Indian Empire. His second proposition was that a policy of sympathy and forbearance was both safe and beneficial. They wanted to promote affection among the people, as that was the best way of getting rid of disaffection. That this was by

no means impossible was shown by the career of Lord Ripon as Viceroy, who created among the people not only contentment but enthusiasm for British rule. (*Cheers.*) Their only real rival was Russia, and they would best strengthen their position in the eyes of the people by emphasizing the difference between British methods and Russian methods. Freedom of speech, the liberty of the Press, and higher education—these were the inestimable boons which Britain had conferred upon India. These were the gifts which Russia could never bestow, and to impair them in any way was to throw away the great advantage they possessed. He always wondered that the British people did not take more national pride in the great Indian race which was gradually awakening under the touch of Western thought and action. It was a race full of virtues. What did the great Akbar say of them? "The Hindus are religious, affable, cheerful, lovers of justice, able in business, admirers of truth, grateful and of unbounded fidelity; and their soldiers know not what it is to fly from the field of battle." That was true then, and was true now. (*Hear, hear.*) They were justly proud of the valour and endurance shown by the British troops. None were more distinguished than the Gordon Highlanders, who were raised in the glens of the county he had the honour to represent. But he thought that the Indian soldiers had justified the words of the great Akbar and had in no way been behind their British comrades. In dealing with a race at the same time so docile and so intelligent, and now so suffering would it not be wise and humane to exercise an abundant forbearance? Would not the noble lord hold out the olive branch, and give an opportunity to clear away misunderstandings and revive the old feelings of mutual regard. (*Hear, hear.*) There

was the heavy cost of punitive police imposed at Poona, which struck the innocent with the guilty. Might not that be removed? There was the case of Mr. Tilak, a scholar and a man who had done good service as a legislator and an educationist. Might not his sentence be now mitigated, or at least the penalty of hard labour remitted, which condemned him to prison dress and association with the lowest class of criminals. There were the Natu brothers, who had now been imprisoned six months without trial. Might they not be released? (*Hear, hear.*) Above all he would most earnestly urge the noble lord to postpone any change in the criminal law till more quiet times. The proposed changes regarding sedition were viewed with the greatest alarm throughout India, and an announcement that they had been postponed would do much to quiet the public mind. In his recent speech on external affairs the noble lord had shown an open mind and a conciliatory spirit. Would he not do so in the case of internal administration where patience and forbearance were still more needed, and where the consequences would be still more far—reaching. ? (*Hear, hear.*) He begged to move the amendment which stood in his name. (*Cheers*).

THE POVERTY OF INDIA.

[*In the House of Commons on February*, 22, 1898, *Mr. S. Smith rose to call attention to the extreme poverty of the mass of the people of India, to the serious condition of the Indian finances, and to the need of a more effective control over Indian expenditure, and to move—" That in the opinion of this House the expenditure involved in the recent operations beyond the frontier of India ought not to be charged entirely upon the revenues of India."*]

Sir W. Wedderburn said he thought his hon. friend had done right to ask for this contribution, and that the Government could not continue to refuse it. From the Suakin case it had been shown that in financial dealings with India the conscience of the nation could be touched, and the nation would not allow the whole burden of this great war to be placed on poor prostrate India. (*Hear, hear.*) A substantial contribution should be given, if it were only from mere pity. India was now crippled in her resources, and such a practical mark of sympathy would help her to revive and struggle to her feet. He asked for a dole, but he did not like a system of doles. He did not think India liked doles. What she most wanted was not charity but fair play, to enable her to develop her boundless resources. But she could not develop her resources without economy in administration, and economy in administration could not be obtained except through vigorous control by the House of Commons. (*Cheers.*) If India were allowed to develop her great resources there would be abundant wealth both for her own people and for the people of this country. This country and India were bound to stand together or fall together. And had

there ever in history been a grander partnership, with more magnificent assets? Great Britain had the command of the sea, and the lead in Western civilisation; and she could give to India the *Pax Britannica* with the arts and sciences and progress of the West. On the other hand India brought to the partnership 300 millions of an ancient race, great both in peace and war, a great agricultural community which could supply every form of raw produce to British workshops, and give a market for her manufactures equal to all the world besides. (*Hear, hear.*) The hon. mover had said the people of India were extremly poor. That was true now, but it need not be so always, and it ought not to be. No doubt the mass of the peasantry were terribly destitute, without store or reserve of food, money, or credit. They not only had nothing, but much less than nothing, being as a class hopelessly in debt to the money-lenders. And upon the top of this had come famine and plague. But he most firmly believed that this deplorable condition of things was by no means necessary. With a fine climate and a rich soil, and abundant labour, cheap and skilful, there were all the elements of great agricultural prosperity. All that was wanted was, that the cultivator should be released from the bonds of debt, and supplied with capital for irrigation and manure. Give him this and he would soon turn all India into a garden. (*Cheers.*) All this was possible, but it was only possible through financial economy, and, as he had already said, that was only possible by means of financial control through the House of Commons. The task was a difficult one, and he doubted whether they realised how difficult it was. In this country the taxpayers were the masters, and controlled the spending departments through their elected representatives. But in India the case was reversed. The spending depart-

ments were the masters, and the only duty of the taxpayers was—to pay the taxes. Of all these spending departments the Indian Military Department was the greatest foe to administrative economy, and it had made itself strong in three commanding positions: 1st, at Simla, where it had captured the Viceroy in Council; 2nd, at the India Office at Westminster, where good civilians go when they die; and 3rd, on both Front Benches of the House of Commons, where it was joined by three other foes of Indian economy —the War Office, the Admiralty, and the Treasury, three other spirits worse than the first. How could such a combination be met? And how was financial justice to be got for India? He only knew of one way, and that was by cordial sympathy and combination between the people of this country and the people of India, for this alone would secure an effective control through the House of Commons. Here the partnership would come in effectively. The Indian taxpayer was directly interested in economy, and he had the knowledge of the remedies. On the other hand the British taxpayer had the power to compel the application of the remedies. The Indian taxpayer knew where the shoe pinched. The British taxpayer was the man who selected the shoemaker. Now what were the remedies? The people of India had long been dumb. They had now found a voice, and for the last thirteen years had been trying, respectfully, patiently, and constitutionally to get a hearing through their Indian National Congress. (*Cheers.*) What were the remedies proposed by the Congress to ensure financial control by the House of Commons? They were contained in Resolution III of the Congress, held last Christmas in the Central Provinces. What was proposed was: (1) that the non-official members of the Viceroy's Legislative Council should have the power

to move amendments on the Budget, and divide on them ; (2) that representative Indians of position and experience should be appointed to the Council of the Secretary of State on the recommendation of the elected members of the Legislative Councils in India ; and (3) that each year the House of Commons should appoint a Select Committee to enquire into and report on Indian finances. Surely these were mild and moderate proposals, going on old and approved lines. If adopted, he believed they would be the first step towards bringing back prosperity to India. No doles would then be either needed or asked for. (*Cheers.*)

THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL.

In the House of Commons on February 14, 1899, *Mr. Herbert Roberts moved, as an amendment to the address, to add at the end the following words :—"And we humbly assure your Majesty that we regard with grave concern the introduction of the Calcutta Municipal Bill, now under consideration by the Bengal Legislative Council, which if enacted, will practically destroy the representative character of the Calcutta municipality, and will constitute a retrograde step in the system of local government in India, and pray that your Majesty will graciously direct that the further considertaion of the Bill be postponed until a duly constituted Commission has taken evidence, and has reported upon the objections urged against the Bill by the ratepayers of Calcutta."*

Sir William Wedderburn said he was sorry the noble lord had not seen his way to accept the moderate and reasonable proposal of his hon. friend, and to give the ratepayers of Calcutta a fair hearing before destroying their self-government. (*Hear, hear.*) He quite agreed

with the noble lord that the bubonic plague was a terrible thing and that all efforts should be made to keep it out of Calcutta, but as a matter of fact the existing municipality had made such efforts and had been successful in keeping the plague out of Calcutta. Why then should they be punished for doing good and successful work ? The noble lord had quoted the report of a health officer that certain parts of Calcutta were in a filty state. Could not health officers report the same sort of thing as regards London and every large town in the kingdom, but would that be considered sufficient ground for upsetting municipal government ? It was evident that the noble lord had not mastered the history of Calcutta sanitation. He had not realised the fact that there had been failure when the management was under Government officials, and success under the representatives of the ratepayers. This was proved by the testimony of the officials themselves, and of the various Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal quoted by his honourable friends. If a great constitutional change was now to be made, a great revolutionary change, he would ask where was the great body of evidence, and where was the mature enquiry which proved the necessity of such a change? (*Hear, hear.*) So far as he could judge the evidence was practically all the other way. The witnesses upon whom the noble lord appeared to rely were Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Sir John Woodburn, but he (Sir W. Wedderburn) thought he could show that these witnesses who were called to curse, had blessed the municipality.

Lord G. Hamilton : This is Sir Alexander Mackenzie's Bill.

Sir W. Wedderburn : Yes; and I would therefore invite the special attention of the noble lord to the remarkable

speech of Sir. A. Mackenzie in December, 1896, at the opening of the great drainage works at Entally in the Calcutta suburbs ; and I do so for two reasons : First, because this was the occasion on which Sir Alexander sprung upon the municipality the unexpected and startling news of their condemnation ; and secondly, because the case of the suburbs is valuable for comparison between official and municipal management ; Up to the year 1884 the suburbs were outside the municipality and under official management ; and this was the description given by the Sanitary Commission of 1884 of their condition : "The insanitary condition of the suburbs which surround Calcutta on the north, east and south, is admitted ; there is no underground drainage, no pure water supply, and the conservancy arrangements fall far short of those in force in the town." Accordingly the Sanitary Commission recommended that the management of the suburbs should be handed over to the municipality. This was done, and the result was seen in the great drainage works at Entally, the opening of which Sir A. Mackenzie was inaugurating. Sir Alexander congratulated the municipality on these works which he described as gigantic, difficult and costly. He said that a wise caution had been displayed regarding them, and that the delay in their completion had not been inordinate ; and he added that, though it had its shortcomings the municipality had never "shown niggardliness or been backward in sanctioning money for either water supply or drainage." Further be declared that the town was "quite remarkably healthy." Having thus acknowledged the public spirited activity of the municipality and the practical success of its work, was it not an extraordinary occasion to choose for announcing that its constitution was to be upset ? And what were the grounds given

The first was that members of the municipality talked too much. This was a failing which the hon. House would look on with indulgence. Next, the executive was not strong enough. But this was a familiar bureaucratic complaint. Officials never liked to be controlled by the representatives of the taxpayers. Lastly, too great deference was shown to special interests. This charge could better be brought against the promoters of the Bill who sought to give preponderating power to the wealthy European class. The special interest favoured by the municipality was that of the ratepayers, and very properly so. Now could there be charges more vague and insufficient to justify a constitutional revolution? (*Hear, hear.*) And in proposing his resolution Sir A. Mackenzie showed a misconception of the facts. For he stated that the constitution of the Calcutta municipality had been borrowed *en bloc* from the most advanced models in England, and he quoted the case of Birmingham. But in Calcutta the Government nominated a goodly proportion of the Commissioners, and appointed the chairman of the Corporation. He was sorry that the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies was not present, as he could no doubt have assured them that in Birmingham the Government neither nominates Town Councillors nor appoints the Mayor. (*Laughter.*) But perhaps the most curious part of Sir A. Mackenzie's speech was when he confessed that his constitutional changes were unnecessary, as the existing law was sufficient: "I believe," he said, "as a matter of fact, you could do nearly all that is wanted for the future under your existing law." . . . . "with most of the evils depicted by the Sanitary Commissioners your existing Act gives ample power to deal." This was the witness brought forward by the noble lord in support of his

revolutionary change. What more could be said against it? The other witness, Sir John Woodburn, speaking last November in the Legislative Council, showed a similar confusion of ideas. He asserted "that the Bill did not in any way infringe the principle of self-government." But under the existing law the representatives of the rate-payers were in a majority of two to one in the Executive. Under the Bill they were to be reduced to a minority of one to two. How could it be said that this did not infringe the principle of self-government? The municipality was being transformed from a popular to an official administration. He was glad to see that Sir J. Woodburn acknowledged the importance of the great public meetings held in Calcutta to protest against the Bill. Six such meetings had been held from December 21 to February 7, the last having been convened by Sir Romesh Mitter, late Acting Chief Justice of Bengal, the chairman being the Hon. Mr. Ghose, member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. Sir John Woodburn also admitted the merits of the Municipal Commissioners. He complained that their zeal was excessive. But he did not say that their zeal outran their discretion. On the contrary he said, "They have shown so much good sense and public spirit in all the graver matters of the past, that I have entire confidence in their bearing for the future." Could anything more favourable be said of any public body? He further took occasion to thank them for the great help they had rendered in the plague, by calming the fears of the people and in establishing temporary hospitals for the sufferers. He (Sir W. Wedderburn) had no wish to screen any shortcoming or obstruct any reforms. But he maintained that the changes proposed were in the wrong direction, as proved by past history, and he protested against revolutionary changes

except after careful and impartial enquiry. He would suggest the following points for enquiry: (1) What was the sanitary condition of Calcutta now, as compared with what it was before self-government? (2) should the progress have been greater, looking to the funds available? And (3) if so, has the progress been impeded by defects in the Constitution? (*Cheers.*)

PARLIAMENT AND INDIAN AFFAIRS.

[*On the order for Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts, Mr. Caldwell moved in the House of Commons on August 8, 1899—" That under the existing procedure the superintending authority of parliament over Indian affairs is not effectively exercised; that the salary of the Secretary of State for India should be placed on the 'Estimates; that the debate on the Indian Budget should be appointed for an earlier day in the Session: and that with a view to the more effectual discharge by this House of its existing duty to the unrperesented Indian taxpayer, the East India accounts should each year be referred to a Select Committee with instructions to report on any special features deserving the attention of the House."*]

Sir W. Wedderburn, who seconded the amendment, said: When the right hon. the member for Wolverhampton was Secretary of State for India he declared in this House that all the members of the House were members for India. The sentiment was received by hon. members with great enthusiasm, and I rejoiced that this was so, as showing that they recognised their responsibility towards India. At the same time, looking to-night at the empty benches, it must be confessed that the attendance is not

what it would have been if the vital interests of British constituents had been in question. I will, however gladly assume that this House sincerely desires to perform its duty of superintending Indian affairs and redressing Indian grievances; and my remarks will be of a strictly practical kind, showing how the machinery of this House fails to secure the object in view. I speak from sad personal experience. For during the last six years I have striven to get a hearing for the Indian view of Indian affairs, but in no case have I been able to obtain independent enquiry into any complaint nor the redress of any Indian grievance; whether that grievance is suffered by an individual, by a class, or by the whole Indian people. Even in this country serious grievances arise, although the supreme authority is in the hands of the representatives of the taxpayers. It will be readily understood that grievances are more liable to arise in India, where the taxpayers have no voice whatever in the choice of their rulers; where the whole power is in the hands of officials; and where those officials, though undoubtedly able and honest, are foreigners, imperfectly acquainted with the people, and dependent for information upon ill-paid and untrustworthy subordinates. Under this system serious grievances must necessarily arise. The question is, what machinery exists by which the House of Commons, as the ultimate Court of Appeal, can secure the hearing of complaints and the redress of these grievances? The theory, of course, is that this can be done through the Secretary of State for India. He is supposed to be responsible to Parliament, and when dealing with Indian complaints he is supposed to occupy a position of judicial impartiality. But this is altogether a delusion. The Secretary of State for India, being backed by the Minis-

terial majority, is, in Indian matters, practically the master, not the servant of the House of Commons; and so far from being an impartial judge, ready to hear complaints and eager to afford redress, he is in reality the mouthpiece and champion of the official hierarchy, against whom the complaints are made. Deriving his views and information solely from the India Office, he becomes naturally the apologist of all official acts, and resents every complaint as a reflection upon the administration of which he is the head. Accordingly the regular routine is to refuse all independent enquiry; to refer complaints for report to the official complained against; and when that official pleads not guilty, to assure the House that no grievance exists. Unfortunately also this refusal of independent enquiry extends even to important questions of fact where there is no personal complaint against an official. For example, for the last forty years I have specially interested myself in the rayats, the peasant proprietors who form the mass of the Indian population. Now there exists an irreconcilable difference of opinion as to their condition. The India Office theory is that the rayat is a fat and comfortable person, increasing each year in prosperity pleasantly conscious of the blessings of British rule. On the other hand all Indian public opinion knows and asserts that he is a miserable starveling, hopelessly in debt to the money-lender; without store of food, money, or credit; living from hand to mouth, so that he readily dies from famine if there is a failure of one harvest. Here is a clear issue of fact; and again and again I have asked for a detailed village enquiry which would settle the point. (*Hear, hear.*) No expense to speak of need be incurred. All that is wanted is to select a few typical villages in each Province and ascertain the detailed facts of the rayats'

condition, the enquiry being conducted by independent local Committees, including officials and non-officials, Europeans and Indians. The village community is the microcosm of all India ; if we could find out how to make one village prosperous, we should have a clue to make prosperous the half million of villages of which India is made up. Three times in the last three years I have moved resolutions in this House asking for such an enquiry, and on each occasion it has been refused. I think I have said enough to show that the House of Commons cannot depend upon the Secretary of State for India to give a ready hearing to complaints : to make impartial enquiry ; and to afford effectual protection to the weak against the strong. Failing him, what other machinery exists in the House of Commons for the redress of Indian grievances? There is the Official Opposition and in all other departments the ex-Minister takes the lead in criticising the doings of his successor on the Treasury Bench. But this is not the case as regards India. The ex-Minister during his term of office has become so thoroughly saturated with the spirit and traditions of the India Office that he cannot emancipate himself when he crosses to the Opposition side; so that when Indian complaints are under debate he seldom comes forward and when he does it is generally to exchange compliments with his successor in office, and denounce the independent member who has brought forward the grievance. Unfortunately, also, the group of independent members who try to redress Indian grievances get little support or encouragement from public opinion in their uphill battle. As a general rule the Press seems to find some curious satisfaction and amusement in recording how the House empties itself when India is discussed, and instead of rebuking this neglect of duty, it calls the

speakers on behalf of India bores and faddists, as if the "ancient tale of woe" of the Indian cultivator was a topic suitable for light and humorous treatment. One hundred and twenty years ago Edmund Burke lamented this corrupted condition of public opinion in England, which, he said, "makes all reform of our Eastern Government appear officious and disgusting." He pointed out that, "in such an attempt you hurt those who are able to return kindness and resent injury." "If you succeed you have those who cannot so much as give you thanks. Our Indian government is in its best state a grievance. But it is an arduous thing to plead against abuses of a power which originates from your own country, and affects those whom we are used to consider as strangers." Unhappily things are now much worse than they were when those words were spoken, especially in two particulars. In those days India was administered in the name of the East India Company, and there existed a wholesome jealousy, both in the House of Commons and the country, of a chartered monopoly. That wholesome jealousy has been lulled to sleep since the Crown has openly assumed the administration. The other great benefit that India then enjoyed, and has now lost, was that every twenty years there was a full and impartial enquiry into the Indian administration, previous to the renewal of the Charter. Out of those enquiries arose all the most useful and progressive reforms by which Parliament has benefitted India. Also the East India Company put its house in order and redressed grievances, when those enquiries were in sight. Now all those benefits are lost. Since 1856 there has been no such enquiry: no day of reckoning for the Indian administration; and the Indian people are quite powerless to obtain that thorough and independent investigation into facts which used to come to

them automatically and without effort once every twenty years.

Lord G. Hamilton: Who gave evidence?

Sir W. Wedderburn: The House of Commons examined any person who was willing to give evidence.

Lord G. Hamilton: They were all servants of the East India Company.

Sir W. Wedderburn: Now, fortunately, Parliament can get intelligent persons to give evidence who are not in that position. Well, I think I have now sufficiently shown that with the existing machinery Parliament is not in a position to redress Indian grievances. Indeed, our system does not even provide a hearing for complaints. The question is, what are the remedies? Our suggestions are of a mild and moderate kind which need frighten nobody. The first is that the Indian Budget debate should be brought on at an earlier date in the Session. An hon. member on the other side has put down an amendment to our motion to the effect that the present system is satisfactory. But I hardly think his approval will extend to the practice of postponing to the last day of the Session the financial affairs of our 250 million Indian fellow-subjects. I will not labour this point, for I know that in this matter I have the sympathy of the House. I have not yet found a member who did not consider this practice, which is common to all Governments, a scandal and a discredit. Our next proposal is that the Indian accounts should be referred to a Select Committee, to report on any special feature deserving the attention of the House. Surely this is a reasonable proposal, and in accordance with the practice of the House when it has to deal with any intricate and important matter. Three years ago I brought forward this proposal, but it was rejected by the noble lord the

Secretary of State, who said that he was "convinced that it would be almost impossible to bring the members of a Committee of this kind together in sufficient numbers and sufficiently often to enable them to report with effect on a question of such importance." I submit that this is an undeserved reflection upon the industry and capacity of the House. One reason why at present an Indian financial debate is futile is because there are no clear issues for decision, and because no hearing is given to the case for the Indian tax-payer. This would in some degree be remedied if independent members of the Legislative Council in Calcutta had power to move amendments on the Budget, and divide the Council. These amendments would show the crucial points which a Select Committee should consider, reporting the result for the decision of the House. Our third proposal is that the salary of the Secretary of State should be placed on the Estimates, like the salary of the Colonial Secretary. This would be a piece of financial justice to India, which ought not to pay for the current business of the House of Commons. But it would also afford a constitutional opportunity for dealing with Indian grievances. I have sometimes occasion to bring forward grievances in other departments of the State, and have always received courteous treatment from Ministers, who give a ready hearing to complaints, never refuse enquiry, and generally discover some means of redress. I cannot say the same of Indian Secretaries of State, who are conveniently free from the ordeal of getting through votes on the British Estimates, while their own salaries are beyond the reach of the House of Commons, being taken direct from the Indian Exchequer. I am convinced that if the noble lord's salary had been on the Estimates, such a grievance as that of the Natu Brothers would have been re-

dressed long ago; as in the case of Dr. Lamont, who had to wait till the hon. baronet the member for Glasgow compelled attention by moving a reduction of the Scottish Secretary's salary. It is now more than two years since the Natu Brothers were cast into prison, without trial, and without to this day knowing the real cause of their imprisonment. When questioned in the House the noble lord has given contradictory replies on this point. In August, 1897, he stated that they were imprisoned in order to unravel a murderous conspiracy. But the murderers of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst have been discovered, tried, and executed.

Lord G. Hamilton: All of them?

Sir W. Wedderburn: The presiding judge found that the crime was an isolated act of fanaticism, and that there was no murderous conspiracy at all. Next, in February, 1898, the noble lord said that the Natus were imprisoned because they worked against the plague regulations. But the published correspondence shows that Sirdar Natu acted zealously on the Committee for carrying out the plague regulations, and that he did so at the personal request of the Governor of Bombay. Again, in April, 1898, a third and different reason was given, when the noble lord said that the Natus were detained because the public tranquillity was endangered. Upon this the comment of the *Times of India*, the leading Press supporter of the Government, is as follows: "The time has come for the Government either to bring the detention of these men to an end or to take the public more into their confidence in regard to it than they have yet done." And referring to the modified arrangement, under which the Natus are now detained at Belgaum away from their homes, this journal argues that "if so light a restraint as confinement within the limits of

a spacious collectorate is sufficient to make these men harmless to the State they cannot now be very dangerous persons." We have heard much of the Dreyfus scandal, and rejoice that it is now being dealt with by the French Government. But in some respects the case of the Natus is worse, for Captain Dreyfus had some sort of trial, whereas the Natu Brothers are absolutely refused a trial and do not even know the reason of their imprisonment. I submit that the good name of this House is involved in this case, and that the Natu Brothers should be either tried or released. In seconding this resolution I appeal for support to independent members on both sides of the House. No revolutionary changes are proposed, but only constitutional methods of fulfilling our existing duty of superintendence and control over Indian affairs. Poor India has been suffering in the last few years from war, famine and pestilence. This need not be so. On the contrary, with an industrious and docile population, and a fine soil and climate, India ought under British rule to be the abode of peace and of plenty. (*Cheers.*)

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

[*In the House of Commons on Tuesday April* 3, 1900, *Sir W. Wedderburn rose to call attention to the Indian famine and to move* "*that, in view of the grievous sufferings which are again afflicting the people of India, and the extreme impoverishment of large masses of the population, a searching enquiry should be instituted in order to ascertain the causes which impair the cultivators' power to resist the attacks of famine and plague; and to suggest the best preventive measures against future famines.*"]

He said: In the first place, I may be permitted to express my respectful appreciation of the efforts which are being put forth by high and low in India to meet this stupendous calamity. A mass of people larger than the whole population of Ireland are now looking to the Government for their daily bread, and the number is steadily increasing, and will continue to increase for the next three months, while no substantial harvest can be reaped before September. To succour effectively such a helpless mass of men, women, and children, scattered over a vast area, is a task almost beyond human powers; and we at home look with cordial admiration upon those who in India are labouring to save life with such untiring energy and devotion. (*Hear, hear.*) But, Mr. Speaker, I will go further, and I will submit that the people of this country, and the Members of this House, have a duty to perform beyond that of passive spectators, however sympathetic. We must not fail to realise our responsibility towards the people of India. We hold these poor people in the hollow of our hand. The 250,000,000 all put together have not as much control

over Indian affairs as a single elector of the United Kingdom. All the power rests with us; and we should remember that, as we retain all the power so we incur all the responsibility and are answerable for their lives and welfare. What, then, is our duty to these starving millions? Surely in the first place this great and wealthy country should give without stint from its abundance for charitable relief. Let us for a moment compare the present situation with that in the famine of 1897. The result is not satisfactory. At the beginning of April, 1897, there were 2,800,000 persons on the relief works in India, and the Mansion House Fund then amounted to about £470,000. To-day the number on relief works is nearly five millions, but the Mansion House Fund has not yet reached £160,000. In other words, the need seems to be twice as great, but the charitable contributions are only one-third of what they were in 1897. The contrast is a painful one. Why has so little been done on the present occasion when the need is so much greater? I do not believe that the British people are less willing to relieve suffering than they were in 1897. (*Hear, hear.*) But what seems to be wanted is a vigorous organised effort to arouse popular sympathy throughout the country. There are many now in England, Government officers, missionaries, and others who have personal experience of the horrors of an Indian famine; others realise the present situation by means of letters from friends in India, and I am convinced that if the Lord Mayor, who is so ready for all good works, were asked to call a great public meeting and bring before the British public the awful sufferings of our fellow-subjects in India, money would pour in to supplement the relief efforts of Government, which can undertake little more than the duty of keeping body and soul together. And, Mr. Speak-

er, what we are all willing to do singly, why should we not do collectively as a nation? The Town Council of Hartlepool has earned the gratitude of India by proposing an Imperial grant; and I doubt not that such a grant would be widely approved throughout the country. (*Cheers.*) In reply to questions on this subject the noble lord the Secretary of State for India has stated that the Indian Exchequer is not in immediate need of help. This may be, but my present suggestion is that an Imperial grant should be given not in aid of the Indian Exchequer, but for the same purposes as the Mansion House Fund—to help the classes who cannot come upon relief works, to find comfort for the sick, the aged and the children, and to aid the cultivators in recovering themselves after the famine and replacing the plough cattle which in many parts are almost extinct. I feel sure that in appealing to public and private charity I have the sympathy of this House. Much may thus be done to mitigate the calamity. But do what we will in the way of relief, death and suffering will be widespread; and the same sad experience will be repeated each time that a famine recurs. So I come to the immediate purpose of my present motion, and ask, can nothing be done by way of prevention to ward off such disasters in the future? This is the point to which I would earnestly ask the attention of this House. (*Hear, hear.*) Speaking broadly the Government are doing all that can be done to mitigate the calamity by famine relief. But my point is that mitigation alone is not enough. There is a good saying that prevention is better than cure; but if prevention is better than cure, it is much better than mere mitigation. Cannot something be done beforehand to strengthen the feeble knees of the rayat, and make him more able to resist when the bad time comes? I most firmly believe

that much may be done. I have closley studied the case of the rayat for the last forty years, and I am no pessimist regarding him. On the contrary I maintain that with a rich soil, a fine climate, and a peasantry skilful, industrious and frugal, India ought to be the garden of the world, and to enjoy, under the *Pax Britannica*, a large share of human happiness. No doubt the rayats are in some respects a feeble folk, but they are strong in their skill and industry, and in their power to combine for mutual help in their ancient village communities. Holding these views I have from time to time pressed for a special enquiry into the rayat's economic condition and needs. And I have asked that this enquiry should be made in selected villages, because the self-contained rural village is the unit and microcosm of all India; and if means could be discovered to make one village prosperous, a clue would be obtained to make prosperous the half million of villages in which 80 per cent. of the Indian population is collected. This view of the case suggests hope for the future. But I do not wish at present to speak of possible prosperity. The problem now before us is a much humbler one. It seeks only to discover how the rayat, without leaving his village, can be kept from danger of starvation. With regard to this point I will put forward three propositions, which will, I hope, commend themselves to all. The first is, that the mortality in an Indian famine is due to the fact that the rayats do not possess a store of food, money, or credit sufficient to tide over one failure of harvest. This proposition stands to reason, for it is evident that the people would not die of hunger if they had food in their houses, or if they could buy or borrow it. The second proposition is that mortality from famine would practically be prevented if they had such a store of food, money, or credit. And

my third proposition is that it is our duty to enquire why the rayats have not got this store, and if possible provide a remedy for so dangerous an economic condition. (*Hear, hear.*) As regards the storage of food we have the authority of the last Famine Commission (paragraph 592 of their Report) that the custom of storing grain, as a protection against failure of harvest, used to be general among the agricultural classes. This fact came under my own observation. In the earlier days of my service in the Bombay Deccan every rayat had an underground store of millet put away, enough to keep his family for a year or two. This was easy, because in a bumper year far more of this coarse grain is produced than the people can consume. Roads and railways in those days were few, so that there was no temptation to send away the surplus produce; and the grains of the millet being enclosed in a hard shell could be buried in the dry soil for considerable periods without deterioration. The rayat, therefore, acted as Joseph did in Egypt. In the fat years he filled his storehouses, so that in the lean years there was bread for the people. For various reasons this excellent practice no longer prevails. But it seems well worth enquiring whether so simple and inexpensive a safeguard against famine might not be re-established. I, therefore, last Thursday put to the noble lord the Secretary of State for India a question on the subject. I asked him whether he would suggest to the Government of India to institute, at a convenient time, a detailed enquiry into the condition and food supply of a few typical villages in the provinces liable to famine, with a view to ascertain whether, by local storage of grain in times of plenty, and other precautionary measures, the economic condition of such villages might be so far strengthened that the failure of a year's harvest would

not bring the cultivators into danger of starvation. The answer of the noble lord was not unsympathetic, and he was good enough to promise investigation into any specific question, concerning which there is insufficiency of information, with a view to the adoption of precautionary or economic measures. With reference to this promise I would submit that the ancient custom of grain storage, and the reasons why it has been abandoned without any effective substitute, is a specific question of the kind contemplated, and I would earnestly press that the enquiry asked for should be granted. The objection to such an enquiry, as stated by the noble lord, is that during the past 20 years two Famine Commissions have already enquired and reported. But I desire to point out that the specific object of those Commissions was a different one. It was to perfect the system of famine relief, as now embodied in the Indian Famine Code. That this was the case will be seen from the instructions which were issued to the last Famine Commission in the Secretary of State's despatch of December 23, 1897. The Commissioners were there instructed to investigate the famine relief measures taken in 1897 in the several provinces, to review the lessons learnt from these operations, and to record recommendations that might prove useful in future famines. There is nothing here about measures of prevention as contemplated in my present motion. As already stated, I am making no complaint with regard to the Famine Code, which is a movement of care and skill, but I press for the modest village enquiry asked for on Thursday last, as I believe it would result in a clearer understanding of the rayat's difficulties, and lead to practical measures for strengthening his economic position. (*Cheers.*)

THE "INDIAN BUDGET," 1900.

[*On the order for going into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts, on July* 26, 1900, *Sir W. Wedderburn, who rose to second the motion, said.*]

Mr. Speaker, I trust that the House will favourably consider this appeal to its pity. When the proposal for a Parliamentary free grant was discussed last April, it was received with favour by hon. members on both sides of the House, but the Government did not then see its way to take any action. The First Lord of the Treasury recognised the terrible distress of India, and was prepared if needful to apply without hesitation to Parliament for assistance, but he did not accede to our request, as the Government of India did not then anticipate difficulty in providing relief. It will be seen that this refusal was conditional; and I submit that since April things in India have become much worse, and that the time has come to reconsider the original decision. (*Hear, hear.*) I hope also that when I make clear the purpose for which we ask the grant the objection taken by the First Lord may in some measure be removed. He pointed out that the Indian revenues sufficed to provide the relief undertaken by the Indian Government. We quite understand that; and we do not propose that the Parliamentary grant should go as an addition to the Indian revenue. (Hear, hear.) On the contrary, we wish the Parliamentary grant to go to the famine-stricken people by way of charity in ways altogether outside the scope of ordinary Government relief. Our object will become clear if the House will consider the

Famine Code rules which distinguish by a broad line between the relief functions of the Indian Government on the one hand and the functions of charity on the other. These rules were summarised in a Memorandum sent last April by the Secretary of State to the Lord Mayor at the time the Mansion House Fund was opened. In this Memorandum the noble lord stated first the duties undertaken by Government. He said that "the Government undertakes to prevent death, and to relieve misery from famine in British India at the cost of the Indian Treasury, so far as organisation and effort can accomplish these ends." And he then proceeded to specify the four purposes for which charity was required: these were (1) extra comforts in the shape of food and clothing; (2) the maintenance of orphans; (3) the relief of specially helpless classes, and (4) the provision of cattle, seed-corn and implements to enable the cultivators to make a fresh start. This division of labour was in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commissioners, the functions of the Government being limited to the preservation of life and health, while charity was expected to supplement this work in certain exceptional cases, while devoting itself principally to the duty of giving the cultivators a fresh start in life. Now in 1897 the charitable contributions were very large, so that no less a sum than three quarters of a million sterling could be allotted out of the charity fund for cattle, seed-grain and implements. It thus resulted that in 1897 the duties undertaken by Government and the duties undertaken by charity were both sufficiently fulfilled. But this unhappily is not the case in 1900. As regards the duties undertaken by Government, we know, from the assurance of the First Lord, that the Indian Government have the necessary

funds and no help is required. But as regards the relief dependent upon charity the resources are altogether insufficient, and it is here that special and exceptional help is required most urgently. (*Hear, hear.*) I would specially invite the attention of the House to the almost despairing appeal made by Lord Curzon to the world's charity on May 28. In that appeal he pointed out how vastly greater the present famine is than that of 1897, both in extent and intensity, while up to date only about half the amount previously subscribed had come in. This cry for help has been answered from many quarters of the globe; from our own Colonies, some of whom have voted parliamentary grants, from the United States, from the Emperor of Germany—even from the Mandarins of China, and the Sultan of Turkey. Under these circumstances it does not seem fitting that this Parliament, which represents the richest community in the world, should stand aloof and refuse a contribution proportioned to the wealth of this country, and its responsibility for the welfare of the Indian people. (*Cheers.*) As far as I can judge there is in the country no unwillingness to make this free grant. On the contrary expressions of public opinion seem all to be in its favour, and I brought specially to the notice of the noble lord the Memorial in support of a free grant from so important a public body as the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. As regards the purposes of this free gift, I would repeat that we do not desire it to be used in support of the general finances of India. It should be placed at the disposal of the Viceroy, to be utilised according to the local needs of the suffering provinces, in helping the prostrate cultivators to their feet, and giving them a chance of regaining their normal condition. (*Hear, hear.*) The excessive need in the present case has arisen from the

wholesale destruction of plough and milch cattle by the drought, the loss amounting to 80 and 90 per cent. in some districts. Without plough cattle the cultivators cannot take advantage of the rains now falling, and so pressing is the need that the Government of India is making advances to the cultivators for this purpose exceeding a million sterling. But this relief will only be partial and temporary, for these loans are only made to those who can give security, and as they must be repaid, the object of giving the cultivators a fresh start will not be accomplished. What is wanted is a free gift of cattle, seed, and implements to all who desire to return to their village homes and regain their old position of skilful and industrious peasants. (*Hear, hear.*) The noble lord has told the House how devotedly the officials in India have worked, high and low. I desire respectfully to associate myself in appreciating the noble work that has been done, and would specially mention that from all parts of India communications reach me expressing deep gratitude to his Excellency the Viceroy for his personal exertions. (*Hear, hear.*) And I would ask whether this House would not be fitly recognising these exertions by placing at Lord Curzon's disposal funds which will enable him to deal promptly and effectually with the misery by which he is surrounded. I see it announced that he is about to visit Gujerat, which is probably the most sorely-afflicted province in India; and if the House will bear with me I will read a short extract describing the condition of the people there as seen by Mr. Vaughan Nash, the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*. "When I look back on the scenes through which I have passed and think of the sum total of human misery, and the despair I have seen on the people's faces, and the ruin this famine has

brought on their homes and fields and on their families, I feel it is hopless to attempt to put into words the agony of India. You see these simple, childlike faces, devoted to their homes and their children, made outcasts by the famine and forced to abandon their customs and leave their homes to get a little bread by labour at stone-breaking or earth-carrying. Most poignant of all in the appeal it made to me was the silence and submission with which they bear their trials. In the hospital sheds, where you pick your way between the rows of dying, or out in the burning sun, where mothers are hammering stones with one hand and hugging a child with the other, you rarely hear a complaint. Even the gift of tears seems to have dried up, except among the childern, whom you see crying sometimes by the side of a sick mother. Those who know India may be able to tell you what spirit it is that looks out from the eyes of these miserables, broken and quenched as they are, and which keeps them dignified and composed in surroundings that are degarding and horrifying. It seemed to me to be the spirit of a noble people—(*hear hear*)—who had won refinement and discipline when our own fore-fathers were savages, a people we may well be glad to succour and proud to rule, looking out at the wreck of all things, seeing their gods, their homes, their country shrivelling to dust and ashes." No words of mine will add to the pathos of this description. But in asking hon. members to take a merciful view of the present appeal I would remind them that the famine in India is essentially a famine of money, not of food, and that on an average 1½d. a day is sufficient to keep these poor people from the pangs of death by hunger. (*Cheers.*)

PART III.

MISCELLANEOUS SPEECHES.

LUNCHEON TO MR. ALFRED WEBB, M.P.

[*At the National Liberal Club, London, on February* 18, 1895, *an entertainment was given to Mr. Alfred Webb, M.P., on his return from India after presiding over the tenth Congress at Madras. The Rt. Hon. James Stansfeld, M. P. presided.*]

. . . . . .

Sir W. Wedderburn, said:—You will see from the toast-list, that I have the privilege and pleasure of proposing the health of the Chairman. I think that we have been peculiarly fortunate in obtaining to-day the presence of Mr. Stansfeld as our Chairman. (*Hear, hear.*) The object that we have at heart is to draw the people of India nearer to us, and to do so in a way that will promote their best and truest interests. (*Hear, hear.*) Our desire is that our relations with India should be those of strict justice, and that we should promote her material interest. But beyond that we desire that our rule should be cordially sympathetic towards the people of India. (*Cheers.*) We also desire always to keep before our eyes the highest ideal of duty, and of moral rectitude; and such being our aims and objects I am sure that we could not have a more fitting representative than our Chairman, Mr. Stansfeld, because, as has already been remarked, during his long, honourable and unselfish career, he has always shown a generous

sympathy for national aspirations, and he has also shown a resolute determination to uphold the highest moral standard in all things, whether social or political. (*Cheers.*) India, gentlemen, during past years and within our own memory has had in the House of Commons such powerful friends as Richard Cobden, John Bright, Henry Fawcett, and Charles Bradlaugh. (*Cheers.*) There were giants in those days. Mr. Stansfeld belongs rather to their generation than to the generation of newer and younger men, to whom I am sorry to see he is prepared to hand over the duties of the future. I am much afraid that very few of these younger men will be found to come up to the standard of the men I have named. But, if we have no heroic strength, we must try to cultivate in ourselves an heroic heart, so that we may say in the words of Ulysses that though

> We are not now that strength which in old days
> Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are ;
> One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Made weak by time and fate but strong in will
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

If we feel painfully the individual weakness of the friends of India compared with former friends of India, we must remember that in these latter days strength comes in great measure from combination and co-operation. Victory belongs rather to big battalions than to single heroes. Therefore, we have been anxious to form in the House of Commons an Indian party who will do their best by combined action to make up for the individual weakness of those who desire the welfare of India. (*Cheers.*) That is a scheme which we have tried to bring forward in an Indian Parliamentary Committee. And there is a new source from which we gain additional strength at the present time. Public opinion in India within the last ten years has become consolidated and organised, and is able

now to give a clearer voice to its views through the Indian National Congress, and our great object has been to bring these forces together—to associate the Indian Parliamentary party with the Indian National Congress, and to get them to co-operate. In that sense Mr. Webb has done us good service. He has visited India as a messenger of peace and of goodwill. He has been a sort of dove out of the ark, and those who have heard his words of wisdom and gentleness may add that he has brought an olive-branch in his mouth. (*Hear, hear and laughter.*) I think he has shown that all classes in India, official and non-official, European and Indian, may work together harmoniously for the general welfare of India. Such being the case, I do trust that the Government will show a kindly feeling towards this movement which we know under the name of the Indian National Congress. (*Hear, hear.*) I can assure the Government that the object and feeling of that Congress is purely friendly to the British administration, that its fundamental doctrine is to preserve the overlordship of Great Britain in India. Indeed, in Indian opinion there is no alternative. The people of India do not want Russia in India. They do not want anarchy in India. But they do want the British Government. (*Cheers.*) What the Indian National Congress does is simply to point out to the British Government how it can remove practical grievances, how it can make its administration more popular, and how it can make firm the foundations of British rule in India. It affords also a genuine expression of Indian public opinion. Members of the Congress are elected in open public meeting in every one of the different provinces of the Indian Empire. (*Hear, hear.*) Every class and every caste is invited to join. Some of our opponents say that the Congress is not representative. Will they be good enough to

tell us in what way we can make it more representative? (*Hear, hear.*) If they will, we will do our best to act upon their advice. (*Hear, hear.*) The Congress is a thoroughly practical body, giving really practical advice to the British Government. After all, it is the Indian people who best know where the shoe pinches. I always think that the relationship between Parliament and Indian public opinion is something like the relationship between a doctor and his patient. The patient, however ignorant he may be, knows where his aches and pains lie. He tells the doctor what he feels and what are his symptoms, and it is the duty of the doctor to make a correct diagnosis and find out the remedy, so as to ensure a satisfactory cure. Even if the patient asks for the wrong remedy, it need not be given to him, but at least he must describe what he feels, and it is on that information that the doctor acts. It is in the same way highly advantageous that the British Government should have an opportunity of knowing through the Indian National Congress the real feelings of the people. (*Hear, hear.*) I would only say it will be with the deepest regret that I shall learn that Mr. Stansfeld has not, as his friends have asked him to do, reconsidered his determination to retire from Parliament. But, whether he remains in the House of Commons or whether he enjoys more leisure outside the House, I do trust that he will continue to give his kindly regard to Indian affairs, and to support us with his wise counsels and with the valuable personal influence he will always carry with him. (*Cheers.*)

MANCHESTER AND THE COTTON DUTIES.

[*In connection with the National Reform Union, a meeting was held on May* 1st, 1895, *in the Gentlemen's Concert Hall in Manchester, to consider the civil and military expenditure in India. The chair was occupied by the Hon. Philip Stanhope, M.P.*]

Sir William Wedderburn, M.P., said he was glad to have this opportunity of saying a few words at Manchester bearing on the question of the cotton duties. The two points he proposed to discuss were practical ones, and they were these:—1. How comes it that the cotton duties have been imposed? 2. What had we better to do in order to get rid of those duties? People in this country, he thought, were beginning to understand that the excessive and ever-increasing Indian expenditure was not only a question for the Indian taxpayer, but was also a question for the British taxpayer, and if it were a question for the British taxpayer generally, much more was it a question for those who supported the industries of Lancashire. Because there could be no doubt it was this excessive expenditure which had produced a deficit in Indian finance, which in turn had caused the cotton duties to be imposed. If the duties had been rendered necessary by useful expenditure for the safety of the Empire, or in developing the resources of India and trade, it would have been difficult to quarrel with such expenditure, but he could show that the deficit had been caused by extravagance in civil and military establishments. Vast sums had been spent in little wars beyond the frontier, wars of adventure and of aggression

on our neighbours, and he held that such expenditure, instead of being necessary and beneficial, was purely mischievous. It was doing harm to our position, and endangering the safety of our Empire, because it was upsetting the good, old traditional policy known as the policy of Lord Lawrence—the policy of keeping within our own bounds, cultivating friendly relations with our neighbours, keeping a full treasury, and producing contentment among the whole population of India. (*Cheers.*) The expenditure of which they complained showed no signs of decrease, nor even of being stationary. On the contrary, it was constantly increasing. In ten years it had gone up by no less a sum than twelve millions of tens of rupees. Even from a military point of view the policy which rendered such expenditure necessary appeared to be a mistake; for every general officer of experience who wrote to the newspapers in support of this policy, four or five wrote to repudiate it. And from a political point of view, such a policy of aggression and restlessness in India was most dangerous and mischievous, because the want of consideration for the rights of our weaker neighbours naturally alarmed the Native States of India and made them suspicious of all our intentions. This policy was in that way undermining our position throughout India. Then there was the question of heavy taxation in India. He had observed that in all the schemes of Russian Generals for the invasion of India the one great hope they had was that while the British army stood face to face with them along the frontier there might be a rising amongst the people of India against their oppressors. The real safety of our position in India was to make that impossible by having no fiscal oppression in India and by spending money on the useful development of the country.

In that way the people of India, instead of being a danger, a sort of powder magazine behind us, would be as a tower of strength to defend us against all comers. He had spent a quarter of a century of his life in the service of the Government of India, and when he retired, was Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay in the political department. He could, therefore, claim to speak as an expert, and as one who had seen Indian affairs from the inside, and he was most firmly convinced, not only that the policy of aggression was not necessary, but that it was wholly mischievous, and he was prepared, therefore, to go with them heartily in any effort to get that great expenditure stopped in the interests of the millions both of this country and of India. (*Cheers.*)

CHRISTIANITY AND POLITICS.

[*On Thursday, October* 27, 1898, *Sir W. Wedderburn, M. P., delivered the following address at the Guildhall, Gloucester, as President-elect of the Gloucester Young Men's Christian Association.*]

Sir William said that all his life he had been engaged in public affairs. He had, to the best of his humble abilities, served his country in very distant lands and he had had some personal experience of dealing with other races; and he could only say that, in all that personal experience, he found the Christian teaching to be the best practical solution of the difficulties that they had had to encounter. There was one simple and easy rule which any child could understand and any honest man could put into effect—the golden rule of "Do unto others as ye would

they should do unto you." (*Applause.*) It really seemed that it would be much easier to give effect in public affairs to that doctrine than in private matters. As a nation we were not so much affected by these petty private considerations and yet the extraordinary thing was that whereas as individuals so many people were found anxiously and conscientiously following the plain line of duty, it appeared to him that in our public affairs we did not act up to the same standard of righteousness. Therefore he asked the most important question, "Does our public life come up to the Christian standard?" He did not think that any person would say it did. Not only did it not come up to the Christian standard, but it did not come up even to the standard of the private practice of individuals. A higher care and degree of consciousness was demanded from the person who acted as trustee for another as regarded the matter of the trust, than was expected from him in the management of his own affairs. Let that be put to the test as regarded our doings for the nation. We were trustees for 250,000,000 of our fellow-subjects in India; and one of the voters he was addressing had more power over the Government of India, than all those millions put together. How did we carry out that trust; did we give greater care to the interests and resources of India than to our own? When it was a question of managing our own affairs in the House of Commons, the expenditure of every penny was scrutinised most carefully and debated for weeks and weeks together; but when it came to dealing with the finances of India—when it was a matter of life and death to those poor people, who often died in thousands from hunger and plague—the House of Commons grudgingly gave a few hours in one day at the end of the Session to deal with the whole of the affairs of those 250,000,000

people (" *Shame.*")Was that in accordance with the standard of Christian teaching; was it doing unto others as we would they should do unto us? It was not, and not only was the House of Commons responsible, but every single voter throughout the United Kingdom. Why was it that the members of Parliament attended to the financial affairs of this country and not to those of India? Because the voters compelled them to; they would lose their seats if they did not look after the affairs of this country. The hon. member gave another instance in which the standard of public morality fell short of that which was exacted in private life. Let them take the question of foreign affairs. A wise and reasonable man who had a little boundary difference with a neighbour would get some impartial third party to settle it; he would not quarrel with his neighbour, and much less would he go to law. If he did go to law that would be the worst thing he would do; they would not expect him to try and kill his neighbour. In these days a person would be considered as simply mad who even contemplated, because he had a little difference about a boundary, arming himself with a bowie knife and revolver with a view to killing his neighbour. Why should not that apply to nations as well? (*Applause.*) If nations were wise and reasonable they would not even quarrel over those matters; they could not go to law; but they could go to diplomacy, which he thought was nearly as bad. (*Laughter.*) For a nation to savagely arm with a view to killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people did not appear to him to be the act of sane and reasonable people. (*Applause.*) Why should we not go to arbitration to settle those matters? It was very easy to cultivate our vanity; selfishness and greediness were inherent in human nature. In our worst moods we were apt to be vain-glorious, greedy

and violent; but instead of making those virtues and things to be cultivated, we wanted to suppress those feelings and encourage unselfishness and peacefulness, with thought for the rights of others. (*Applause.*) The patriotic person was he who tried to cultivate in a nation that ideal. A nation ought to be a pattern for individuals, and not the reverse. (*Applause.*) We should cultivate a sensitive conscience; when we had any dispute with our neighbours we should try to put ourselves in imagination in their place, and deal with the matter in a calm, reasonable, and unselfish spirit. He could not see why the same moral considerations that were binding on the individual should not be binding upon the nation, which was simply an aggregate of individuals. If anything were wrong for him to do acting by himself, how did it become right if he did it jointly with several other people? (*Hear, hear.*) The nation should be better than the individual, and it should aim at the highest ideal, which was to be found in the Bible—"Peace on earth, good-will towards men;" and the principles laid down in the Sermon on the Mount. We had a great deal to do with weaker races, and we should remember that a black man as well as a white man had his natural feelings, and that his land, liberty, home, and family were dear to him. He (Sir William) desired the greatness and the power of the British Empire, and during the years he was in India he had done what he could to build it up; but as Shakespeare said, whilst it was excellent to have a giant's strength, it was tyrannous to use it like a giant. He wished that British power and influence should extend, and that wherever it did so it should be a blessing and never be a curse; and it would never be a curse as long as we followed those precepts to which he had referred. (*Loud applause.*)

INDIA IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

[*Sir William Wedderburn delivered the following address on "India in the House of Commons" at a meeting of the "Liberal Forwards" held at St. Ermin's Mansions, London, in March,* 1899].

Sir William Wedderburn, who was most cordially received, said : Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen,—My object in addressing you this evening is to explain, a little in detail, the extreme difficulty, I may almost say impossibility, of obtaining from Parliament any redress of Indian grievances. I am anxious to enlist your practical sympathy in this matter—(*hear, hear*)—and for this purpose will place before you the result of my own experience, which will show how discouraging is the task of those who desire to bring before the House of Commons the Indian view of Indian questions. By the Indian view I mean the view taken by the Indian taxpayers, the great mass of the people, as distinguished from the view taken by the official governing class of Anglo-Indians. In almost every case that arises the popular opinion with regard to events, their causes and consequences, differs entirely from the official opinion; bnt it is the official opinion which alone decides everything, and that practically without appeal. What we want is that the popular opinion should get a hearing. (*Hear, hear.*) Let me illustrate my meaning. In Ireland there is a Dublin Castle way of looking at every question; and there is generally quite an opposite view taken by the great bulk of the Irish people. But the view of Dublin Castle prevails; although the people of Ireland have the

vote, and although their views are vigorously and continously voiced by 82 Nationalist members in the House of Commons. On the other hand poor India has not a single vote, and not a single representative in Parliament. What chance has she, then, of being heard? A good and homely proverb tells us that no one knows where the shoe pinches except the wearer. But the high and mighty Anglo-Indian officials at Simla do not believe this. They make the shoes —(*laughter*)—and the duty of the Indian taxpayer is to wear these shoes, and to say that he enjoys wearing them. (*Hear, hear.*) If he does not do so he is ungrateful; not to say seditious. Indeed, if he complains in India he is showing disaffection, and, under the new sedition laws, is punishable with a long term of imprisonment. His only hope is to get a hearing in this country. (*Hear, hear.*) For this purpose the people of India have organised their public opinion; and each year, through the Indian National Congress—(*applause*)—they send to England a clear statement of their sufferings, their needs, and their aspirations. But they have no means of compelling the attention either of Parliament or the British public. To use the poetic words of Edmund Burke, "the cries of India are given to seas and winds, to be blown about, in every breaking up of the monsoon, over a remote and unhearing ocean."

WANTED: REAL PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL.

To proceed now to practical details, I will begin by assuming that the British people honestly desire that justice should be done to India. We admit our national duty in this matter. (*Hear, hear.*) The question is, How do we fulfil this duty? It is no light task to secure justice for 250 millions of people living 6,000 miles away. We give these people no voice in the management of their own affairs; and entrust these affairs absolutely to our official

agents, a handful of Europeans, who administer the country by means of a horde of ill-paid and often corrupt Native subordinates. How do we exercise control over these official agents? Under so purely a bureaucratic system of government grievances must necessarily arise. What machinery exists in Parliament or elsewhere for hearing complaints and redressing grievances? I say advisedly, and from bitter experience of many years, that practically no control at all is exercised; and that when the Indians suffer wrong, whether it is an individual, or a class, or the whole people, there exists no machinery through which justice can be obtained. ("*Shame.*") The theory, of course, is that the Secretary of State for India is responsible to Parliament, and that in dealing with Indian complaints he occupies a position of judicial impartiality. But this is altogether a delusion. The Secretary of State for India, being backed by the Ministerial majority, is, in Indian matters, practically the master, not the servant, of the House of Commons—(*hear, hear*)—and so far from being an impartial judge ready to hear complaints and eager to afford redress, he is in reality the mouthpiece and champion of the official hierarchy, against whom the complaints are made. Deriving his views and information solely from the India Office, he becomes naturally the apologist of all official acts, and resents every complaint as a reflection upon the administration of which he is himself the head. What we want is that the control of Parliament and the redress of grievances should be made a wholesome reality instead of a discreditable sham; and it is the manifest duty of the British public to see that this is done. (*Applause.*) Until this is done, our expressed desire to do justice to India is little better than national hypocrisy. We are like the man in the scriptures who

says to the naked and hungry, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," but gives them neither food nor clothing.

FROM AKBAR TO LORD G. HAMILTON.

Mr. John Stuart Mill has put this point of national duty very plainly. In his book on "Representative Government," he points out that our position in India is that of one nation exercising despotic rule over another nation. But despotism by a nation is not necessarily a good thing, any more than despotism by a home-bred autocrat; and Mr. Mill enquires by what course of conduct we can justify our national domination over India. In history there have been many good home-bred despots, a Cyrus, a Trajan, and an Akbar the Great. (*Hear, hear.*) Poor humanity has seldom been happier, for the time being, than under the rule of such men. But, unfortunately, a Cyrus may be succeeded by a Cambyses, a Trajan by a Domitian, an Akbar by an Aurangzib. Accordingly Mr. Mill points out that "under a native despotism a good despot is a rare and transitory accident; but when the dominion is that of a more civilised people, that people ought to be able to supply it constantly." That is the ideal for our Indian rule. The Secretary of State for India now exercises the despotic power of the Great Moghul. Our duty is to find always an Akbar to be our Secretary of State for India. (*Hear, hear.*) In this we have not as yet been successful. In the meantime we have only found a Lord George Hamilton. (*Laughter and cheers.*) Mr. Mill admits that we cannot hope to see the ideal fully realised, but on the other hand he insists almost fiercely on our national responsibility as regards this ideal; and says that "unless some approach to it is made the rulers are guilty of a dereliction of the highest moral trust which can

devolve upon a nation; and if they do not even aim at it they are selfish usurpers, on a par in criminality with any of those whose ambition and rapacity have sported from age to age with the destiny of masses of mankind." I ask whether we as a nation have done any thing to clear ourselves of these grave imputations? It used to be said of the great Akbar that he sat with four doors open; that is, a hearing was given to all who had complaints, whether they came from the North or the South, the East or the West. He lived in India; he understood the people, the language and their feelings; he knew their needs, and sympathised with their aspirations; he was both willing and able to redress their grievances. Our system of selection has raised Lord George Hamilton to the seat of power. How does he fill the place of the great home-bred despot? (*Laughter.*) He is, of course, under great natural disadvantages. He has never been in India; he does not know a word of any Indian language; he has probably not spoken to a dozen independent Indians in the course of his life; while his information and inspiration are drawn exclusively from the India Office, which is the home and stronghold of officialdom's innermost clique; a sort of Dublin Castle, only more so. (*Hear, hear.*) Labouring under these natural disadvantages, what steps does Lord George Hamilton take to strengthen his position as an impartial court of appeal? Does he make independent enquiry into the facts? Does he give a friendly hearing to those who represent Indian public opinion? Does he in dealing with complaints show an anxious desire to redress grievances? Not at all. Again and again, on important occasions, when the facts were in dispute, we have asked for independent enquiry as [to these facts. But never once, in these years, has such an enquiry been

granted. (*Shame.*) The most recent example is that of the Calcutta Municipality, a representative body, the majority of whom are elected by the Calcutta ratepayers. This representative municipality has done good work for the last 20 years; its sanitation and water supply have received the cordial approval of every Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; it has been successful in keeping the plague out of Calcutta. (*Cheers.*) But as part of a general policy of reaction and repression it is now sought to destroy the representative character of this great municipality, and to hand it back to the official management which before proved itself to be inefficient. A Bill for this purpose has been brought in the Bengal Legislative Council, and my friend Mr. Herbert Roberts moved, as an amendment to the Address, that public enquiry should be made into the work of the municipality, and a hearing given to the ratepayers, before upsetting an institution which has admittedly done good work for 20 years. It seemed a reasonable request that evidence should be taken, and the accused party heard, before he is condemned and executed. But that was not Lord George Hamilton's view, and the enquiry was refused. May I give one other instance? I am specially interested in the rayats, the peasant cultivators who form the mass of the Indian population. Now there is an irreconcilable difference of opinion as to the condition of the rayat. The India Office myth is that he is a fat and comfortable person increasing each year in prosperity, pleasantly concious of the blessings of British rule. On the other hand all Indian public opinion knows that he is a miserable starveling; hopelessly in debt to the money-lender; without store of food, money, or credit; living from hand to mouth so that he readily dies from famine if there is a failure of one harvest. Here is a clear

issue of fact; and again and again I have asked for a detailed village enquiry, which would settle the point. No expense to speak of need be incurred. No commission need go from England. All that is wanted is to select a few typical villages in each Province, and ascertain the detailed facts of the rayat's condition, the enquiry being conducted by independent local committees including officials and non-officials, Europeans and Indians. The village community is the microcosm of all India, if we could find out how to make one village prosperous, we should have the clue to make prosperous the half million of villages of which India is made up. (*Hear, hear.*) Twice I have moved resolutions to this effect in the House of Commons, and on both occasions have been met by a refusal. Why should Government refuse such an enquiry, unless it is because they do not wish disagreeable truths to be made known to the public? Their whole policy is one of secrecy and obscurantism. The invariable House of Commons routine is to refuse all independent enquiry; to refer complaints for report to the official complained against; and when that official pleads not guilty, to assure the House that no grievance exists. (*Laughter.*) In addition to this the Indian Secretary usually tells the questioner, amid enthusiastic Ministerial cheers, that he is libelling the noblest body of public servants the world ever saw. (*Laughter.*) And the London Press, being in Indian matters mostly guided by Anglo-Indian opinion, re-echoes these sentiments, and holds up the inconvenient questioner to the scorn of all true patriots. From the above it will be seen that Lord George Hamilton does not come up to the standard of the great Akbar as a protector of the weak against the strong; and that we are a long way from fulfilling Mr. Mill's ideal.

NO FEAR OF THE BRITISH ELECTOR.

But it may be asked, how is it that in all other departments those who bring forward grievances do not experience the same difficulties? In all other departments they are courteously treated by Ministers, who give a ready hearing to complaints, never refuse enquiry, and generally discover some means of redress. The reason is a simple one. In all other departments there are votes behind the grievance—(*hear, hear*)—and these no Minister can afford to disregard. Also if a Member does not receive satisfaction, he can punish the Minister in Supply by moving a reduction of his salary, and by impeding the vote for the service of his department. These potent remedies are not within the reach of the Member who is flouted by the Indian Secretary. In Indian questions alone there is no fear of the British elector. Also the Indian Secretary is conveniently free from the ordeal of getting through votes on the British estimates, while his own salary is beyond the reach of the House of Commons, for he pays himself direct out of the Indian Exchequer.

"CAELUM NON ANIMUM MUTAT."

It will thus be seen that the Indian reformer in the House of Commons does not repose on a bed of roses. I do not wish to weary you; and I will now only add two more points in which he is at a special disadvantage. In all other departments the Ex-Minister, sitting on the front Opposition bench, takes the lead in criticising the doings of his successor on the Treasury Bench. But this is not the case as regards India. The Ex-Minister during his term of office has become so thoroughly saturated—(*hear, hear*)—with the spirit and traditions of the India Office, that he cannot emancipate himself when he crosses to the Opposition side: *Caelum non animum mutat.* Thus

as regards the calamities through which poor India has passed during the last three years; the famine, the plague, the press prosecutions, the Natu imprisonments, the new Sedition law, Sir Henry Fowler has been worse than useless. (*Hear, hear.*) It is true that he raised his voice in favour of an imperial grant to India, and made an excellent speech on Mr. Roberts' motion regarding the Calcutta municipality. But when Indian grievances are debated he seldom emerges from obscurity; and when he does, it is generally to pour indiscriminate praise on Anglo-Indian officials, or to make an attack on the independent Members of his own party. (*Hear, hear and cries of "Shame."*) The remaining point, to which I will only briefly refer, is the notorious scandal by which the so-called Indian Budget debate is relegated to the last day of the Session, when most independent Members have left London, and when the small residue of the House, kept together by the lash of the party whip, are eager to be gone, and grudge every half hour given to debate. Is this an assembly, and an occasion, suitable to deal justly and effectively with the financial affairs of 250 millions of our fellow-citizens, for whom we are responsible? I remember a distinguished Indian friend of mine, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee (*hear, hear,*)—once told me that coming to England some years ago he visited the House of Commons to hear for the first time the great Indian Budget debate. When he came in Sir Roper Lethbridge was addressing the House, and his only audience was the Speaker. What an object lesson to set before the Indian people, as showing the care with which we fulfil our trust towards them! And what does the British Press, as the organ of public opinion, do to rebuke this shameful neglect of duty—(*hear, hear.*)—and to encourage those who are fighting an uphill battle on behalf

of defenceless India? With a few honourable exceptions, the Press does little or nothing. On the contrary, as a general rule, the London papers and their reporters seem to find satisfaction and amusement in the fact that the House empties itself when India is discussed; and instead of giving moral support to the group of independent Members who try to get a hearing for India, they cover their own neglect of a public duty by calling them bores and fadists, and suggesting that their action is prompted by some mysterious and unaccountable, though malignant dislike of their fellow-countrymen. (*Laughter*).

THE SYSTEM MUST BE ALTERED.

One hundred and twenty years ago Edmund Burke lamented this corrupted condition of public opinion in England, which, he said, "makes all reform of our Eastern government appear officious and disgusting; and, on the whole, a most discouraging attempt. In such an attempt you hurt those who are able to return kindness and resent injury. If you succeed, you save those who cannot so much as give you thanks. All these things show the difficulty of the work we have on hand: but they show its necessity too. Our Indian Government is in its best state a grievance. It is necessary that the correctives should be uncommonly vigorous; the work of men—sanguine, warm, and even impassioned in the cause. But it is an arduous thing to plead against abuses of a power which originate from your own country, and affects those whom we are used to consider as strangers." These words were spoken in the debate on Mr. Fox's East India Bill, when Mr. Burke made his noble, but unsuccessful, attempt to establish a just and effective control over the Indian bureaucracy. Sad to say, things are now much worse—(*hear, hear*, from Sir Charles Dilke.)—than they were

when these words were spoken, especially in two particulars. In those days India was administered in the name of the East India Company, and there existed a wholesome jealousy, both in the House of Commons and in the country, of a chartered monopoly. (*Hear, hear*, from Sir Charles Dilke.) That wholesome jealousy has been lulled to sleep since the Crown has openly assumed the administration. The other great benefit that India then enjoyed, and has now lost, was that every twenty years there was a full and impartial enquiry into the Indian administration, previous to the renewal of the charter. (*Hear, hear.*) Out of these enquiries arose all the most useful and progressive reforms by which England has benefited India (*Hear, hear.*) Also the Company put its house in order, and redressed grievances, when these enquiries were in sight. Now all these benefits are lost. Since 1856 there has been no such enquiry; no day of reckoning for the Indian administration; and the Indian people are quite powerless to obtain that thorough and independent investigation into facts which used to come to them automatically and without effort once every twenty years.

Ladies and gentlemen,—this concludes my case. I still believe that the British people desire to do justice to India. (*Hear, hear.*) But if the desire is to be anything better than a pious opinion, they must alter the existing system in the House of Commons. At present that system is the ideal of "How not to do it." (*Loud applause*).

AGRICULTURAL BANKS FOR INDIA.

[*On Friday, March* 18, 1898, *in connection with the East India Association, Sir W. Wedderburn, M.P., delivered at Westminster Town Hall, London, a lecture upon "Agricultural Banks in India." The following is a full report of the lecture :—*]

Speaking a few days ago, in the debate on the Address, regarding the distressed condition of the Indian peasantry, Lord George Hamilton made the following declaration in the House of Commons: "As regards legislation, the Government are only waiting for a quiet time to consider a number of proposals for the purpose of freeing the people as far as possible from the influence of the money-lenders. I hope we shall be able to set up some system of local banks for the assistance of the Natives." This announcement has not a very positive ring about it, but I welcome it as bringing the question of agricultural banks once more within the sphere of practical politics.

AN EARLIER PAPER.

It was in the year 1883 that, under the auspices of Mr. John Bright, at Exeter Hall, I read before "The East India Association" a paper entitled "The Poona Rayats' Bank," in which I set forth a scheme of an experimental or pioneer bank for the benefit of the struggling peasantry. The argument was stated as follows at the opening of the paper: "Though land banks have prospered in other countries, they are new to India. We have therefore felt, in approaching the present undertaking, that the first thing to be done is to acquire a certain amount of

local and special experience by observing the actual working of such an institution in India. And this it is proposed to do by starting an experimental bank, under good local management, upon a limited scale and within a limited area. For various reasons the Poona district has been selected for the experiment and the system followed will be that which has been found most successful in practice elsewhere, modifications being gradually introduced as experience may suggest. When trustworthy facts and figures have thus been collected we shall know what rocks and shoals are most to be avoided, and we shall be in a position to decide in what direction, if any, a business of this kind can be safely and profitably extended." I then gave a brief sketch of the Deccan rayat's position, showing how he was crushed and demoralised by his load of debt. Next, I noticed what had been done in Europe, Australia, and Egypt in the matter of agricultural banks; and then I showed how it was proposed to apply similar principles in the case of the Poona experiment. I may summarise the matter by saying (1) that the scheme was based upon the methods of the credit system, as tested by experience in every civilised country in the world: in Germany alone there are more than 2,000 of these popular banks at work; (2) that these methods were adapted to local circumstances in the Deccan, and were accepted by debtor and creditor alike; there was to be a settlement of old debts, with a cheap and simple mode of recovery from the crop of the year; and (3) that the scheme was approved by every authority in India, including the Viceroy in Council, and by all public opinion both in India and in this country. It will thus be seen that as long ago as 1883, I was praying for immediate action by means of practical experiment. I have been urging immediate action ever

since. But, unfortunately, instead of action, there has only been talk and correspondence—interminable controversy on speculative questions, but nothing has been done.

EXPERIMENTS LONG OVERDUE.

What I have to say now is mainly a repetition of what I have advocated all these years; to show what has been attempted, and why it has failed; and then to submit the proposition that there has been sufficient academic discussion, and that practical experiment should be no longer delayed.

At the Exeter Hall meeting Mr. Bright opened the proceedings with the following weighty remarks:—"These small cultivators in India, if they borrow money from the native bankers of the district, pay a rate of interest which, in England, we should feel to be altogether destructive to any industry. Twelve per cent. is, indeed, a moderate rate; some pay 24, and some undertake or engage to pay as much, perhaps, as 30 or 36 per cent. It is obvious that capital employed in agriculture in any country must be absolutely unprofitable to the cultivator if he has to pay a rate of interest even of the middle sum, or 24 per cent. The scheme before us purposes to offer to the Indian cultivator a reasonable loan on reasonable interest, and to improve the mode of the latter's annual collection, so as to avoid going through the courts and ruining a man who finds he is behind in the regular payment of his interest. The native bankers who lend money at these extreme rates of interest are themselves sensible that it would be an advantage to them if the rate of interest were lower, the security better, and if the interest would be collected in some manner which would cause less suffering to the borrower and to the tenant. They are, therefore, willing to contribute to

large extent funds which shall enable some banking system to be established which shall give this great relief to the Native population of India. . . . . . . The political prospect in India would be greatly improved if such a scheme as this could succeed, because if you have a vast population in a state of constant distress, they must be in a state of constant discontent. . . . . If it were possible, by some large and widely extended scheme of this kind, to bring comfort into the homes of the cultivators, there can be no doubt that, with better prospects in their families, there would be a greater degree of contentment, and they would look with more satisfaction to the Government which controls their affairs." Mr. Bright was followed by Sir James Caird, one of the highest authorities on all land questions, who had recently returned from India, where he had served on the Famine Commission. He entirely approved of the experiment being made in the Deccan, and held that the scheme, by facilitating the digging of wells, would operate as an important preservative against famine. Other experienced speakers followed, and the debate was strongly favourable to the scheme; and next day the *Times*, *Daily News*, *Standard* and other London papers gave their approval to the proposal. A short time afterwards, at the invitation of the directors, I read a paper before the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, with Mr. G. Lord, the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, in the chair, on "Government Concessions to Agricultural Banks in India." A resolution in cordial support of the scheme was moved, carried unanimously, and forwarded to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India. Subsequently I had an interview with Sir Nathaniel Rothschild, M.P. (now Lord Rothschild), who had already expressed himself interested in the subject. He informed me that if

the terms agreed to by the India Office were satisfactory he would favourably consider the scheme, and he did not think there would be difficulty in raising the necessary capital.

THE GENESIS OF THE SCHEME.

It is now necessary briefly to indicate the genesis of the scheme in India, and to show the support which it received both from the public and from the Government in that country. The idea of agricultural banks was first mooted in Bombay as early as 1860, when Lord Elphinstone's Government passed a resolution in favour of loan banks which should advance money to the rayats on fair terms. It was not, however, till 1882 that the project took practical shape at Poona. After much careful enquiry, many local meetings, and prolonged negotiations with those concerned, a scheme was at last agreed upon which received the hearty co-operation of all parties interested; the rayats, the money-lenders, the native capitalists, and the promoters of the enterprise. A public meeting was then held at Poona, under the presidency of the Collector of the District, resolutions were passed for the establishment of an experimental agricultural bank, and an influential Committee was appointed to carry it through. This Committee waited upon the Governor (Sir James Fergusson) and set forth their proposals for an experimental bank in the Purandhar Taluka of the Poona Collectorate. His Excellency received the deputation in a very cordial manner, expressed bimself personally favourable to the scheme, and promised that he and his colleagues would give it their best consideration. Accordingly the scheme was forwarded to the Viceroy in Council, whom it reached at a favourable moment. The Indian Government, as the general landlord, had always

desired to help the rayat with loans for land improvement. But from various causes the attempt to make these advances through official agency had failed in every part of India. And the Government had at last come to the conclusion that it must look to private enterprise for any real progress in this direction. The Marquis of Ripon was then Viceroy and Sir Evelyn Baring (now Lord Cromer), who was Finance Minister, had personal experience of agricultural banks, so that the Poona scheme received immediate and sympathetic consideration, as providing the exact means desired to carry out the Government policy. A very important despatch, No. 638 of December 5,1822 was sent from Simla to the Bombay Government expressing the satisfaction of the Viceroy in Council with the proposals made, and setting forth in detail the action which the Government were prepared to take. Subject to certain minor conditions the Government of India accepted the Poona proposals. They were willing to grant important concessions on the lines of those allowed to agricultural banks in Europe ; but at the same time they were careful to explain to the Bombay Government that similar privileges would not necessarily be granted in future to other similar banks. The Poona bank was, in fact, treated as a pioneer enterprise, the object being to make a practical experiment in a limited area, with the hope that when the system was once established it would spread wherever needed, and, to use the words of the despatch, "prove of incalculable benefit to the whole country." In conclusion, the Government of India stated that they attached very great importance to the experiment, and asked the Bombay Government to undertake the working of the measure. In reply the Bombay Government, in their despatch of April 5,1883, stated their

willingness to give the scheme a trial. In this way, after no little labour and negotiation, every interest and every authority in India was brought into substantial agreement as regards the scheme—and on May 31, 1884, a unanimous despatch signed by the Viceroy and his colleagues, was forwarded to England setting forth fully the circumstances of the case, and asking the sanction of the Secretary of State to the proposed experiment. "We are anxious," they said, "to give effect to a scheme which we believe to be advocated on purely disinterested grounds, which can, under the experimental conditions proposed, be carefully watched, and which is likely, if successful, to be productive of much benefit to the country."

"NOTHING WAS DONE."

I think I have now shown that as long ago as 1884 public opinion, official and unofficial, had declared itself sufficiently in favour of a practical experiment, and I can claim that even then there was no excuse for any further delay. Nothing was done, and what is worse, nothing has been done during the fourteen years that have since elapsed. Not even the smallest practical beginning has been made. Then, as now, the mass of the Indian peasantry were in great destitution, and in chronic danger of famine, having no store of food, or money, or credit. They not only possessed nothing, but less than nothing, for they were deeply in debt to the money-lenders. To rescue them from this hopeless indebtedness a practical remedy, tested by long and varied experience, was proposed. In India the authorities were desirous of giving this remedy a trial in a cautious experimental way; all public opinion in India and in England had declared itself in favour of the movement. Only the formal sanction of the India Office at Westminster was required; but this, unfortunately, was

just what we could not obtain, the India Office raising a fruitless controversy regarding hypothetical difficulties, and eventually in 1887 refusing absolutely to allow the experiment to be made. In reply to a question in the House of Commons, Mr. S. Smith was informed that the Secretary of State in Council had carefully considered these proposals "with the result that it was determined that they were not capable of practicable application." Was there ever a more extraordinary answer or decision? These gentlemen sitting at Westminster had not been in India for years, some never there at all; they were not practical bankers; they had no special knowledge either of the continental system, or of the financial requirements of the Poona district where the experiment was to be made. Yet they assumed to know what was practicable there better than the bankers of Poona and the Government of Bombay; and they were so sure they were right that they would not trust the Viceroy in Council to make an experiment on a limited scale in a limited area to which he "attached very great importance."

AFTER FIVE YEARS.

After a further period of five years I again made an attempt to get some action taken. In May, 1892, I read, before the Society of Arts, a paper on "The Reorganisation of Agricultural Credit in India," when I urged that the time for academic discussion was long past, and that a pioneer bank should be started. But at the same time I took the opportunity to reply to the objections raised by the India Office to the Poona scheme. These objections are set forth in the Despatch No. 95 of 22nd October, 1884, and it will be found that they refer to matters of detail, and are of a speculative kind. For example, it is objected that the scheme professes to be one of private

enterprise, whereas in reality the bank will be a Government institution; again, it is contended that the financial calculations of the Poona bankers do not show that the business will be profitable; and it is argued that the condition of the rayat is either too good or too bad to be suitable for the operations of an agricultural bank. The only objection that can at all be called a practical one is that which has reference to the coercion of defaulting debtors, and this objection is founded on a misconception. The despatch takes exception to the proposed concession under which the bank's advances may, in the case of a defaulter, be recovered as a revenue demand. This is only objected to from the fear, to use the words of the despatch, lest Government should "incur all the unpopularity and odium of collecting debts, which, though private obligations, are treated as public demands." This objection evidently arises from a misapprehension, the Secretary of State being under the impression that the Government of India proposed to undertake the duty of collecting the bank's advances. There could not be a greater mistake. Both the distribution and collection of the bank's advances was to be done entirely by the paid agents of the bank. The question was one of jurisdiction, not of collection. With its moderate rates of interest, and with its desire to show forbearance to its debtors, the bank expected very seldom to require any compulsory process. Still, for cases of contumacy, it was necessary that some ultimate means of coercion should exist; the only question being whether this compulsion should come through the costly and cumbrous machinery of the Civil Court, with its lawyers and bailiffs, warrants and executions, and sales of land, or whether it should come through the simpler and cheaper methods of the revenue process, in which case the village officers would exercise their customary authority,

preventing the defaulter removing his crops until he had paid the instalment due to the bank. All that the Government of India proposed was that when compulsion was required the less grievous method should be preferred, the method which Government itself employed when recovering its own agricultural advances from defaulters. As regards "unpopularity and odium" arising from coercive process, Government will have to bear that, whether the jurisdiction is exercised in the Judicial or in the Revenue department. The masses in India make no distinction between the Revenue and the Judicial departments; to them these two departments are equally the "Sirkar," or ruling power, while the educated classes know that the Executive Government, as the sole legislative power, is responsible equally for the constitution of the courts and the revenue administration. The only difference is that if the Revenue machinery is employed, there will be less friction and less hardship, and consequently the unpopularity falling upon Government will be less in amount.

A CASE FOR EXPERIMENT.

In this debate Sir Charles Bernard, Revenue Secretary at the India Office, took part. He expressly stated that he did not speak on behalf of the India Office, but at the same time his responsible position there gives importance to what he said. He spoke kindly of the scheme and its promoters, but dwelt upon the objections raised in the despatch, and added one or two fresh ones, such as the large area of the proposed experiment, and the difficulty of settling the old debts. He at the same time gave the headings of concessions which he thought might be granted, and expressed a hope that a revised scheme might be brought forward. I really do not think we shall gain by any further argument regarding these objections. My

point at present is not that I am right in this controversy, and that my opponents are wrong. My point is that it is only by actual experiment that it can be satisfactorily proved who is right and who is wrong. Do not let us go on like the mediæval philosophers with their live fish and the full bowl of water. Half of them, arguing from the inherent properties of matter, held that, if the fish was put into the full bowl, the water would not overflow. The other half, relying on first principles, held that it would; and they would have been arguing to the present day if the king, being a man of a practical turn of mind, had not ordered the experiment to be made. So I say; let us go to work at once. If on actual trial the proposed area is found to be inconveniently large, let it be reduced; if the settlement of old debts is found impracticable, try some other device; if recourse to summary revenue process is found to be so often necessary as to cause public inconvenience, we shall be willing to admit that our proposal in this respect is not justified. But what I do maintain is that our scheme carefully worked out, approved by the local people, and accepted by the Government of India, was entitled to a fair trial. The recommendation of so high a financial authority as Sir E. Baring should not have been brushed aside in this summary way, supported as it was by his successor, Sir Auckland Colvin, who was equally prepared to find the funds necessary for the experiment.

"SOLVITUR AMBULANDO."

That this is the only right and rational mode of proceeding is proved, if any further proof is needed; by the further waste of five years' time since 1892. On March 15, 1892, the Madras Government placed Mr. F. A. Nicholson "on special duty for the purpose of enquiring into the

possibility of introducing into this Presidency a system of Agricultural or other Land Banks." Here is the old error over again; the fish and the bowl. Can the authorities not see that the only way of ascertaining "the possibility of introducing" agricultural banks is to begin introducing them; that we shall never learn to swim if we refuse to go into the water? What has been the result of Mr. Nicholson's appointment? He has produced two large folio volumes, one of 400 and one of 300 closely printed pages. But I cannot find that in these five years any practical beginning has been made. The only result of his labours is that he has now realised the truth that we have been declaring for the last fifteen years. This is how he closes his second report, of July 28, 1896: "The writer's motto for the initiation of village banks continues to be 'Solvitur ambulando'; great measures are always impossible till they are found to be successful, and success depends upon incessant experiment, perseverance, and courage; the problem is insoluble till it is attacked in actual experiment."

There is the truth in a nutshell. Success depends upon incessant experiment: the problem is insoluble till it is attacked in actual experiment. This is what Lord George Hamilton should take to heart. He tells us that he hopes to be able to set up some system of agricultural banks. But this will never be done if he continues to proceed in the way the India Office has done for the last fifteen years. As regards the future, a heavy responsibility lies upon the Secretary in Council. He has crushed our scheme and substituted nothing in its place. He is now bound to take the initiative; and I would ask him to profit by the advice of Mr. Nicholson, and set going practical experiments in different parts of India, relying not only or mainly, on European official action, but consulting with the people and obtaining the co-operation of all that is best in the Indian community.

THE INDIAN FAMINE: ITS CAUSE AND REMEDY.

[*On Sunday November* 4, 1900, *Sir William Wedderburn delivered an address in the Great] Hall, Tunbridge Wells, upon "The Indian Famine: its Causes and Remedy." The meeting was one of a series held during the autumn and winter under the title "Sunday Social Gatherings." Councillor F. Lawson Dodd (Honorary Secretary) presided. The Chairman, having cordially welcomed Sir William Wedderburn on behalf of himself and the Committee, Sir William Wedderburn said*:—]

Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am very grateful to my friend Mr. Lawson Dodd for the opportunity he has given me to say a few words about Indian Famines, in order to indicate some of the causes of these recurring calamities and to suggest possible means of prevention. It is admitted on all hands that in the present famine the Government of India has worked well in the administration of relief; also large sums have been contributed by private charity; but it is evident that this does not go to the root of the matter. Famine relief and charity no doubt mitigate the existing calamity, but they do nothing towards investigating the causes in the past or discovering remedies for the future. Now there is a good proverb which says that prevention is better than cure; and if prevention is better than cure, it is much better than mere mitigation. Hence I find people continually asking me, "Are Indian famines inevitable? Can nothing be done by way of prevention?" I say that people are right to ask this question. If in our own locality we had

an outbreak of typhoid fever, we should not consider it sufficient to give medicine to relieve the sufferers. We should demand a minute, a microscopic enquiry into the causes of the outbreak, with a view to prevention in the future. So as regards India, for whose welfare we are responsible, it is our bounden duty to insist that a full and fearless enquiry should be made into the causes of all this death and suffering. Now, in answer to this important question—"Can nothing be done by way of prevention?"—I reply that much may be done; and, further, I maintain that on Government rests the responsibility of investigating the causes and discovering the remedies. Unfortunately, this is not the official view. The other day Sir Henry Fowler, in the House of Commons, expressing the official view, declared that he did not see where the responsibility of Government came in with regard to the causes of the famine; and he said that the cause of famine was the failure of rain, and he did not see how Government could fairly be blamed for a bad monsoon. Now this may be true as far as it goes, but it is not the whole truth. For famine—which means death by starvation—is made up of two factors drought and destitution. Drought produces a loss of harvest, but that alone would not cause wholesale death by hunger if the villages possessed a domestic store of food, or money, or credit, sufficient to tide over one failure of harvest. It is because the people do not possess this domestic store that they die of hunger. Therefore it is evident that famine is not caused by drought alone but by its effects upon a population which is in a chronic and dangerous state of destitution. Not only do the peasantry as a class possess nothing, but they possess much less than nothing, being hopelessly in debt to the money-lenders. And I further maintain that Government is

directly responsible for such a condition of things, because this destitution has been produced by over-taxation and by the introduction of revolutionary changes unsuited to the condition of the people. It is all very well for Sir H. Fowler to say that Government is not responsible; but in India, where the people have no voice in their own affairs, the responsibility of Government is complete. The officials jealously keep all power in their own hands, and as they retain all the power, so they must accept all the responsibility. (*Applause*).

The practical question, then, that we have to ask is what are the causes of this chronic and dangerous destitution among the Indian peasantry? And in considering this point we must remember that there are very few large towns in India, and that eighty per cent. of the population is contained in the rural villages, where the land is cultivated by the rayats, or peasant proprietors, who pay rent to the Government on their holdings, which are usually from ten to fifty acres. The question is, why are these men not in a position to tide over one failure of harvest? In order to make the situation clear I will state my view in the form of three propositions; and the first of these is, that this chronic destitution ought not to exist, there being in rural India all the elements of wealth. With a rich soil, a fine climate, and abundant labour, cheap and skilful, India ought to be a garden, not a place of desolation. I have said that labour is abundant, and here we come upon one of those popular fallacies which have done so much to obscure the real facts. It is constantly alleged that the cause of Indian proverty is the too rapid multiplication of the people and the consequent over-population. But, as a matter of fact, the Indian ratio of increase is not high as compared with other countries. Also this abundant popu-

lation is a population of wealth-producers, if they only get a fair chance. The position is like that of a factory with unlimited raw material, and unlimited demand for the manufactured article. In that case abundant labour is a source not of poverty, but of wealth. Again, I said that the labour was cheap, and here we come upon another favourite fallacy, which is that the poverty of the rayat arises from his extravagance in marriage and other ceremonies. This fallacy was dispelled by the report of the Deccan Ryots' Commission, who after long and detailed enquiry were of opinion that the rayats' expenditure in these ways was not more than reasonable. The fact is, the rayat is the most frugal of human beings, living on the average at a cost of 1½d. a day. As regards the great skill of the rayat as a cultivator, we have the evidence of Sir James Caird, one of the Famine Commissioners and the highest authority on such matters, who declared that there was nothing that we could teach him. And as a matter of fact, the *petite culture* of India brings every market product to its greatest perfection, as we see in the case of opium, rice, indigo, tea, coffee and tobacco. Under these conditions, and with the protection of the *Pax Britannica*, we should expect among the Indian peasantry not destitution, but a substantial share of material comfort. My second proposition is that there formerly existed a cheap and complete safeguard against famine in the ancient custom of domestic grain storage. When I first went out to India, forty years ago, I served in the Bombay Deccan, which is now one of the famine districts, and at that time the practice was general of storing grain in dry pits dug under the houses. The staple food there is millet, a small grain in a hard shell, which can be thus kept for a long time; and these domestic stores were often sufficient to feed the

family, not only for one season, but for three or four years. This practice was recognised by the Famine Commissioners who reported that the "custom of storing grain, as a protection against failure of harvest, used to be general among the agricultural classes." And that it was an ancient practice in the East will be familiar to you from the story of Joseph in Egypt, who, during the fat years, laid up a store sufficient to feed the land during famine. You will also remember the parable of the rich man, who filled his barns in time of plenty, and thus had "much good laid up for many years." My third and last proposition is that this simple and effective safeguard against famine has been lost owing to the action of Government. Now when I say that the ruin of the rayat has been caused by revolutionary changes introduced by the Government, I do not mean to say that these changes were all bad. On the contrary, many of them were good in themselves, and they were almost all introduced with the best intentions. This was so as regards the domestic storage of grain. For this storage was easy and natural, because the surplus produce of each year was not marketable, there being few roads or other means of communication. When under our Government roads and railways were opened up, the surplus produce was drained out of the villages and went to distant markets. Again, if the rayat was in debt the creditor did not care to seize the store of grain because it had no saleable value; also local public opinion would not have premitted his doing so. Now we have erected courts of justice on the European model in the rual districts; the creditor, with a decree of the court in his hand, has behind him the whole power of the British Empire; and he makes a clean sweep of the little hoard upon which the safety of the debtor and his family used to depend. Of course, the official answer to this is that it is

for the advantage of the rayat to find a market for his surplus produce, and that he thus stores up money instead of grain for the time of need. This answer might be a good one if the rayat were able to store up the money, but, unfortunately, so heavy is the Government rent and other taxation that he is drained of all cash and is besides forced into hopeless debt to the money-lender. In the old times rent was taken from him in kind, as part of the gross produce; so he paid according to a sliding scale—a large amount when the harvest was good, little when the harvest was scanty, and nothing if it failed. But by one of those revolutionary changes to which I have referred, we now exact a fixed and rigid cash payment; and as this is rigorously collected before the crop is harvested, the cultivator must go to the money-lender, and thus his trouble begins. Once in doubt his ruin is assured, for the debt mounts up by usurious interest, and through the machinery of the civil courts he becomes the hopeless slave of the money-lender. He thus lives from hand to mouth; and one failure of harvest makes him the ready victim of famine. (*Applause.*)

Now, it will be asked, what is the remedy? I think long ago someone used to sell pills for earthquakes. I propose no quack remedy; no single pill that will cure all ills from which the rayat is suffering. But I have indicated some of the causes which have led to his ruin, and those causes must be scientifically dealt with. We must, in the first place, reconstitute the rayat's domestic store, either of food, of money, or of credit; and in order to do this we must rescue him from the clutches of the money-lender. One means of doing this is by the establishment of agricultural banks, such as exist in every civilised country where there is a peasant proprietary. (There are 2,000

such banks in Germany alone.) Also the taxation must be reduced, and collected in a less rigid manner. A modified form of collection in kind might be adopted; while courts of arbitration should be established for the rural districts. But all such reforms depend upon economy in administration, the reduction of military expenditure, and the fair apportionment between India and this country of the cost of wars carried on in the general interests of the Empire. I have indicated some of the directions in which remedies may be sought; but all that I now ask for is a careful and fearless enquiry in a few typical selected villages in the different famine districts, in order to test the truth of my allegations. The village is the unit and microcosm of all India; and if by careful enquiry and practical experiment we can find the way to make one village prosperous, we have found the clue to make prosperous the half million villages of which rural India is made up. (*Applause.*)

THE INDIAN ADMINISTRATION.

[*At the Sesame Club, London, on Monday the* 16*th March*, 1903 *Sir William read a paper on the Indian Administration. The chair was occupied by Mr. Ashton Jonson*].

It was a favourite saying of Abraham Lincoln that no man was good enough to govern another without that other's consent. Great Britain governed the people of India to the best of their ability, and with good intentions, but not always with the Indians' consent. If we look in the dictionary, we find that "Empire" means supreme and absolute power. "Our Indian Empire" therefore means supreme and absolute power exercised by the 40 millions

of the United Kingdom over the 280 millions of British India. To-night I propose to consider the machinery by which that power is exercised. What are the merits—and defects—of this machinery? And what are the objects that we seek to obtain by its means? Some people think that India is a sort of commercial asset, to be exploited for the benefit of its rulers. Others regard it as a trust, to be administered for the benefit of the Indian people. For my own part I believe that these two objects are not necessarily incompatible, and that our own highest interests will be served by a just and unselfish exercise of the power we possess. India for the Indians will, in the long run, prove to be India for the benefit of the British people. Of course, upon this point opinions may differ. But in any case, we want the machinery of the Empire to be efficient, and up to date. We are all agreed about that. We want John Bull's great Indian estate to be well managed; his tenants to be contented and prosperous; his flocks and herds to be fat and well-liking.

Now in this matter I am a decided optimist. I am convinced that India ought to be exceedingly prosperous. India includes the most fertile regions on the face of the earth; it is peopled by industrious, law-abiding, skilful cultivators; and the *Pax Britannica* has been unbroken within its borders for nearly half a century. Under these circumstances India ought to be a garden; and her people should be well fed, happy, and prosperous; and capable of providing a market sufficient to keep busy every workshop in the United Kingdom. If this is so, why is the country scourged by famine and pestilence? Why are the masses in such hopeless destitution that the failure of one harvest causes the death of millions, unless they are fed by the State?

It is clear that there must be something seriously wrong in our management of this vast and valuable possession. Let us then examine critically the machinery of our rule ; and I think we shall find that the mischief is inherent in our bureaucratic system ; and that these disastrous results are the natural consequence of centralised officialism, which has gradually destroyed the best elements in our administration ; while it has paralysed the industry of the cultivator. Our machinery of Empire may be described as consisting of five distinct parts (1) the Imperial Parliament ; (2) the Secretary of State for India in Council ; (3) the Viceroy in Council ; (4) the Indian Civil Service ; and (5) the Indian Army. The Viceroy in Council is the central figure ; the actual administrator of India ; the Civil Service and the Army are his instruments of administration ; while his action is controlled by the Secretary of State, and the British Parliament. During the time at our disposal it is evidently impossible to inspect the whole of this great engine of government; but I propose to tell you something about the practical working of that portion which I know best, I mean, the Indian Civil Service of which I was a member for 27 years. Now my first point is, that we should approach our subject in a dispassionate and even humble spirit. If, with regard to the Indian people, we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. However disagreeable the task, we must be willing to confess our national shortcomings, as the first step towards necessary reforms. Let us apply these principles to the Indian Civil Service, nothing extenuating, and setting down naught to malice. I gladly acknowledge the merits of that great service. There has probably never existed a more upright, industrious, and well-meaning body of public servants. But this

is no reason why we should shut our eyes to the serious defects attaching to a system of government by a close body of foreign officials, exercising absolute power, and practically without control. We, in England, do not properly realise the evils of such a system ; evils which we have never ourselves felt. We must look to the condition of Russia if we wish to understand what those evils are ; study such a book as Tolstoy's "Resurrection," in order to realise the practical effects of a highly-centralised and uncontrolled official despotism. It has been well said that officials are like fire, which is a good servant, but a bad master. In England officials are servants of the public, so we see only their good side. But we must not, on that account, assume that they are entirely to be trusted when they are the masters of the public, as in Russia and India. On the contrary, acute grievances are sure to arise where the people have no voice in the management of their own affairs ; and it is manifestly our duty to understand and correct the mischiefs inevitably arising from the bureaucratic rule which we maintain by means of irresistible British bayonets. What are these mischiefs? I will enumerate three of the evil tendencies, which have specially impressed themselves on my observation : (1), Excessive departmental centralisation ; (2), Antagonism towards independent public opinion ; and (3), The formation of a dominant clique at headquarters.

(1).—OVER-CENTRALISATION.

Sir W. Wedderburn, having described in detail the constitution of the village communities, and shown how the introduction of centralised departments on Western lines had fatally affected the social organisation of an ancient and conservative race, proceeded :—

What is the remedy? The remedy is not far to seek. It consists in retracing our steps, and in returning to well-tried native methods, perfecting these by the application of modern science. In other words we want to administer our districts like well-governed and progressive Native States, calling to our aid all the indigenous talent which lies ready to our hand. This view of our duty has been forcibly put forward by the two leading Conservative statesmen who, in our time have controlled Indian affairs. In the words of Lord Iddesleigh, "We should endeavour as far as possible to develop the system of Native Government, to bring out Native talent and statesmanship, and to enlist in the cause of government all that is great and good in them"; while Lord Salisbury said that "the general concurrence of opinion of those who know India best is that a number of well-governed Native States are in the highest degree advantageous to the political and moral condition of the people of India." I propose that we should be guided by these wise and weighty declarations, and re-organise our district administration on the model of a well-ordered Native State, like Mysore or Gondal. The English Collector would be the "Raja"; and he would be provided with an experienced Indian colleague, who would correspond with the "Diwan" or Prime Minister. These joint-administrators would exercise the power of the "Durbar"; and their hands would be strengthened by associating with them a local elective council, as in Mysore, thus making their administration more stable, and giving them true insight into the needs of the local population. Thus constituted, the district administration might safely be left very much to itself. So long as the joint-administrators carried with them the assent of their council, and conformed to

the general principles of British rule, there would be little ground for interference by the Central Government, which would look mainly to results. Then, as regards co-operation from the specialised departments. Different districts have different requirements: one has extensive forests, and needs a highly-qualified forest-officer; another depends on irrigation; another requires development by engineering works; another desires help in working mines; another needs an agricultural expert to improve the growth of cotton. For each of these requirements the joint-administrators would indent on the proper department for the help required. But the experts deputed by those departments would exercise no executive authority; they would act merely as skilled workers, being under the orders of the joint-administrators, and receiving their pay as a charge upon the district. Under this elastic and sympathetic rule the village organisations would regain their old vigour; industry would revive; and new sources of revenue would become available, both for the central government, and for local requirements.

So much for over-centralisation, and its cure. We now come to another evil tendency of bureaucratic rule.

(II.)—ANTAGONISM TO INDEPENDENT PUBLIC OPINION.

The reason of this antagonism is, that foreign officials usually give their confidence to the wrong people. Speaking of India, Mr. John Stuart Mill, in his "Representative Government," lays stress upon this point, showing how the officials are out of touch with the best classes: "For most of their detailed knowledge," he says, "they must depend on the information of natives; and it is difficult for them to know whom to trust. . . . . They are prone to think that the servilely submissive are the trustworthy." What is the reason of this? Sir John

Gorst, as Under-Secretary for India, gave us the reason in his celebrated speech about Manipur and the tall poppies. He pointed out to the House of Commons that it is the nature of despotic governments to hate and discourage strong and independent men. And the consequence is that they fall into the hands of the venal and the servile. Now, if the leaders of the Indian community were unwilling to assist the British Government with advice and information; if the people boycotted their foreign rulers as the Italians did the Austrians in Lombardy and Venetia; there might be some excuse for those rulers betaking themselves to a secret police, to spies, and informers. But this is not the case in India. On the contrary, the great educated class has frankly accepted the British Government as the national Government. Their wise and far-seeing leaders recognise that in the British connection lies the best hope for India's future. At the same time they know that this connection cannot be permanent unless British rule is founded upon the prosperity and contentment of the masses. Instead, therefore, of standing aloof in hostile neutrality, they have come forward actively to help, placing their experience and influence at the disposal of the Government. This is the movement known as the "Indian National Congress." This great Congress is composed of representatives freely elected from every province of India; they meet each year at Christmas time for discussion; and bring their conclusion respectfully before the Government in the form of definite, practical, and moderated suggestions. The Congress leaders have no cast-iron programme; their object is to make known to the Government the needs of the people, and to help the Government in ministering to those needs. Is it not a God-send for the foreign rulers of India that there should exist this friendly organisation,

in full touch with the people, specially pledged to the support of the British Government, able and anxious to supply trustworthy information, and desirous unselfishly to promote the welfare of the people ? One would suppose that such friends in need would be honoured and welcomed. Not at all. With a few honoruable exceptions, the high officials have given the Congress nothing but black looks ; while the baser sort incline to think that they should be prosecuted for sedition. Contemplating this marvellous example of statesmanship, I am reminded of the caustic humour of Ingulphus Pritchard in his " Chronicles of Budgepore." I remember his sketch of the Collector of Budgepore, who unfortunately has but a poor opinion of the people of the country, and who tells his friend that " none of them are to be trusted, sir ; no, not one ! But he corrects himself. Yes, he does know one trustworthy Native ; only one, but he is a man of exceptional honesty and devotion. It turns out of course that this one honest man is his own Serishtadar, or official factotum ; who is the biggest scoundrel in the place, who has taken the measure of his master's foot, who plays upon his simple vanity, and who for his own ends poisons the great man's mind against all that is independent and respectable in the local community. This little story is a parable, for the worthy Collector of Budgepore is the type and emblem of our whole administration, which has a perfect genius for the selection of the unfittest. Our high officials for the most part resent disagreeable truths, and keep at a distance the men who possess the confidence of the Indian public ; reserving their favours for the venal sycophants, who form the one dangerous class of the Indian community. What is the remedy ? Not much is required, only a little less haughtiness, and a little more

sympathy with popular feelings and aspirations. Why should the maker of the shoe be angry if the wearer of the shoe tells him where it pinches? Why not meet the Congress half-way, and discuss their suggestion on the merits? It would be a graceful act if the Viceroy were each year to receive the Congress Address personally from the hands of the President, as an important public ceremonial. And in answer to the Address the Viceroy might make a general declaration of the views and intentions of the Government in regard to the various burning questions brought forward in the resolutions. Such a declaration would give great satisfaction throughout the country; it would remove many misunderstandings; and it would encourage the Indian public in following constitutional methods when dealing with public affairs. There remains for consideration the mischief arising from

(III).—THE FORMATION OF A DOMINANT OFFICIAL CLIQUE.

In India there is the Simla clique, made up of successful men, who surround the Viceroy and monopolise place and power. What are the qualities which enable these men to outstrip their fellows and reach those empyrean heights? Count Tolstoy, in describing the means by which high office is attained in Russia, gives a foremost place to the art of being all things to all men. The most useful quality for a rising official is, he says, "the absence of any general principles or rules of morality, either personal or administrative, this making it possible for him either to agree or disagree with anybody according to what was wanted at the time." Without going as far as this, we may admit that strong convictions, whether in one direction or the other, seriously handicap a man in the race for high office. For the views of successive Viceroys and Governors differ widely; and they naturally select for prominent positions

only those who are able heartily to carry out their policy. This is what mainly determines the relative position of A, B, and C, members of the Civil Service, upon the ladder of promotion. Thus A, the unbending disciple of Lord Lawrence, must lose his chance of promotion when Lord Lytton is choosing instruments for his forward policy on the frontier; while B, an enthusiast for Lord Lytton's press laws, can hardly expect a prominent position in Lord Ripon's schemes of popular emancipation. Meanwhile C, with no strong convictions either way, can serve either master with equal zeal; and thus mounts two steps on the ladder of promotion for each single step secured by either A or B. I think, therefore, that I may fairly say that, compared with the rank and file of the Civil Service, the favoured few at Simla are below, rather than above, the average, as regards strength of convictions and the sturdiness of their independence. This is much to be regretted, because these favoured few exercise a strong influence in determining the Viceroy's policy; they practically monopolise Lieutenant-Governorships and other high offices in the Provinces; and after retirement from the service, they migrate to the India Office at Whitehall, where they surround the Secretary of State; and, as members of his Council, sit in appeal upon their own decisions. The influence of the Simla clique extends yet further. For the Secretary of State becomes their mouthpiece in Parliament. And if, in the House of Commons, an independent member tries to get a grievance redressed, he is crushed by the Parliamentary majority, which the Secretary of State can command, no matter which political party is in power. What is the remedy for this state of things? The best antidote is to be found in giving the Viceroy and the Secretary of State

a reasonable opportunity of hearing at first hand the Indian view of Indian affairs. This could be accomplished by appointing at least one representative Indian member to the Executive Council of the Viceroy; and by giving to India a fair share of the appointments in the Council of the Secretary of State. Lord Beaconsfield, in his scheme of Indian Government, proposed that four seats in this Council should be reserved for "a special Indian constituency"; and the spirit of this proposal could be carried out if representatives for each great Indian province were nominated by the independent members of the Legislative Councils, who are themselves chosen by representative bodies.

Other important reforms are needed; but I will not go further this evening in my inspection of our official machinery. Perhaps I may appear to have dwelt too much on the seamy side of our rule. The British public are so accustomed to hear unmixed and unlimited praise of the Indian Civil Service, that you may, perhaps, suppose that I am an unfriendly critic, or that I have some personal grievance against the service. But this is not so. On the contrary, I have a hereditary interest in the good name of the service. My father entered the Bombay Civil Service near the beginning of last century, and served in India for thirty years. My eldest brother followed him, in the Bengal Civil Service, and lost his life in the Mutinies of 1857. And when I went out three years later to join the Bombay Civil Service, I felt very proud to enter what I believed to be the finest service in the world. Nor have I any personal grievance; for I had a good time in India, serving many years in the Secretariat, which is the inner sanctum of the official tabernacle. If I appear as a critic, it is because I am anxious that the blemishes should be removed, and that the Indian Civil Service should be a source of unmingled good to the people of India. (*Cheers.*)

INDIAN REFORMERS AND ANGLO-INDIAN OFFICIALS.

[*At the Westminster Palace Hotel on Tuesday, November* 22, 1904, *at the invitation of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, a large gathering of English and Indian friends resident in England gave a "Send-off" to Sir Henry Cotton, K. C. S. I. (President-elect) and Sir William Wedderburn, Bart. on the eve of their departure for India to attend the twentieth session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay*:]

Sir W. Wedderburn, who was received with prolonged applause, said : I desire to join my friend Sir Henry Cotton in thanks to our kind entertainers this evening—our thanks for this manifestation of goodwill and of confidence in us personally, and in our public capacity, on account of the cause which we represent. As regards the personal question, I have to thank Sir Henry Cotton for the kind way in which he has referred to me. I feel proud to say that, in some respects, we stand in the same category—I refer to our hereditary connection with the Indian service. For several generations, from father to son, we have been in that service, and in India the principle of heredity goes for a great deal. We know that in every village there are hereditary servants, "Watandars," we call them in the Bombay Presidency, and I am glad to think that Sir Henry Cotton and I may, perhaps, claim to be "Watandars" of India. I am sure we are proud to be the hereditary public servants of the Indian people. Sir Henry Cotton's connection has been with the other side of India. My family have been in Bombay for a long time, and have received unnumbered kindnesses from the people of the Bombay Presidency. I was brought up to believe in the Indian people, and I have always desired to follow in the

footsteps of men like Mountstuart Elphinstone, Sir John Malcolm, Sir Thomas Munro, and others who enjoyed the trust and confidence of the Indian people, a trust and confidence which have never been misplaced. (*Cheers.*) That school in recent years has been represented by the well-beloved Marquis of Ripon, and I am glad to say that I carry out to India a message from Lord Ripon to the effect that his interest in India never has been abated, and never will abate so long as he lives. (*Loud cheers.*) Now that is all I have to say in regard to the personal question, and I will deal next with the public aspect. Again, I claim a similarity in my position and that of my friend Sir Henry Cotton. In India we well know there are two different sets of opinion upon almost every question. There is the official opinion and there is the independent opinion of the Indian people. One may say that there are two camps in India, and it is the privilege of Sir Henry and myself that we may claim to belong to both of these camps. That is to say, we belong to the European official camp; we belong to the Inner Circle of European Officialdom; it is quite true that the Inner Circle of European Officialdom has not always been very much pleased with us—(*laughter*)—in fact, we have been sometimes called ugly names, and we have been told that we are disloyal. I do not think they really meant it, for they know we are not disloyal. I was rather struck with an example of language sometimes used in this country with regard to men who differ from their friends. The language I refer to was used by a historian who describes the state of feeling between Tories and Whigs at the time of the Reform Bill agitation. He declared that on one side Tories were regarded as a monstrous barrier against progress, and that on the other hand the Whigs were

considered dangerous incendiaries bent on the destruction of the Constitution and the Crown. Now, in reality that was not the actual belief with regard to the two parties, and we may suppose that when excited politicians or eloquent journalists tell us that we are dangerous incendiaries who desire to upset the Constitution, it is just their way of saying that we differ a little in our general beliefs. (*Laughter.*) Therefore, I say we can claim to be in both camps— we belong on the one hand to the class of European officials, and on the other hand, and I say it with pride, we also, to a certain extent, represent the independent educated opinion of India. (*Hear, hear.*) The evidence of that is that my friend Sir Henry Cotton has been unanimously called upon to preside over the forthcoming great Indian National Congress, and that I have the honour of being asked to go out to attend the Congress as the representative of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, which tries to represent the views of that Congress to the British people. Owing to this double position of ours, we may claim to be in a sort of way, "amicus curiæ"—we may claim to be friends of both parties. I said just now there are two opposing camps, the official and the non-official, but there is no reason why they should be opposing camps. On the other hand, we have this great Indian Civil Service, which, I think, I may fairly say is the most hard-working, most public-spirited, and most uncorrupt bureaucracy that has ever existed in history, and their desire is for the welfare of India. On the other hand, we have the educated people of India—and the people of India are the most law-abiding on the face of the earth; indeed if one may say that they have a defect, it is, perhaps, that of being too amenable to authority. I say there is no reason

why these two parties, both of which have the welfare of India at heart, should be in any way antagonistic, and it is the duty of the "amicus curiæ" to, if possible, remove all misunderstanding and to make the two parties friends. (*Hear, hear.*) Now, if we can remove misunderstandings, and if we can obtain co-operation, it appears to me that we should open up a prospect of great happiness and prosperity in India. (*Hear, hear.*) I am not a pessimist at all, and I believe that the industrious population of India, with its fine climate and rich soil, have a great future before them, if the people of this country will only be guided by those who know where the shoe pinches. And there is no reason why all these periods of poverty and famine should exist, and why India should not become the garden of the world. That, at any rate, is my view of the matter. As regards the objects and policy of the Indian National Congress, I would ask you to refer to a document—we call it our Manifesto—which was issued in the year 1900 by our friend, the Chairman, the G. O. M. of India, by Mr. Hume (who with Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee—whose illness, and absence here to-night, we so deeply regret—was the founder of the Congress), and myself. In that we stated the history and origin and objects of the Congress, and as Sir Henry Cotton has said we declare the object to be to focus the best and most matured Indian public opinion and to place it before the Government in moderate and respectful language. Another object was, by giving free vent to all opinions, to prevent anything like secret, underground conspiracy, which would be equally harmful to the Government and to the people of India. These were the two main objects, and that was the temper of the Indian people, who are so friendly to the Government that they are willing to make great self-sacrifices and to undergo

even odium and penalties in order to carry out that policy, and to keep the Government absolutely informed of their feelings and their inmost wishes. I say that that shows, in the people of India, a patience and a desire for good government, as well as a capacity for it, which is unequalled in any country that I know of. When I was a boy, I lived a good deal in Italy, which was governed at that time by an Austrian bureaucracy, which was in itself efficient and well-intentioned, but how did the Italians treat them? They boycotted them, they would not look at them, and if an Austrian officer entered a cafe in St. Mark's Piazza all the Italians there got up and walked out, and they would never enter the place again. Now, there are certain journalists who will persistently insist upon mis-interpreting the true feelings of the Indian people, and on putting a bad complexion on everything. Suppose they succeeded—and I am thankful to say they never have been successful as yet in producing such a feeling as that which existed between the Italians and the Austrians—supposing, however, they had succeeded, they would have only put back for years the whole prospect of the British Government in India ever becoming a really national Government. I ought to say that this "Manifesto" of 1900, to the issue of which I have referred, was sent to all the leading public statesmen connected with India. One was despatched to Lord G. Hamilton, who returned it to me with the remark: "I have no reason to complain of the way in which you have stated the case." Lord Lansdowne similarly acquiesced in the statements contained in it, and, therefore, I consider that that Manifesto may be regarded as an accepted statement of the history and objects of the Indian National Congress. What we want to produce in the Government of India is the proper trust

and confidence in the Indian people. Even within the last few years, the Indian people have had opportunities, and have seized them, of showing themselves worthy of that trust. We have passed in India through very critical times—times of war, pestilence, and famine, yet when this country was engaged in what was almost a death-struggle in South Africa, how did the people of India behave? Even a breath of suspicion of hostility would at that time have been most detrimental to the position of England. There was not even a breath of unfriendly feeling; on the contrary, it was the troops from India that first stayed the trouble of the British. Although I am glad to say that the Indian people had very little sympathy with the South African business, yet they considered that on the whole the interests of the British Empire were the interests of India, and they gave their support willingly to this country in those critical times. The same was the case in regard to the war with China, in which India took so large a share. (*Cheers.*) In times of pestilence, again, we know, as regards the plague that, when administrators like General Gatacre in Bombay, and Colonel Ardagh in Poona, took the people into their confidence, and acted in concert with friendly Indians, there not only was no trouble or disturbance, but the Administration proved exceptionally efficient, and these officers were gratefully thanked for the precautions they had taken. Again, there is no point in Sir Antony MacDonnell's great Famine Report more distinct than the grateful references to the ready help given by Indians. He said that in the famine districts the great secret of successful administration was to bring independent unofficial assistance, in order to deal with it. I am glad to think that in connection with this matter there is to be at the next Congress a ver

interesting development with reference to the poverty of the people, and bearing on the material condition of India, I mean the Industrial Exhibition, which will be opened next month by his Excellency Lord Lamington. I think that the successful organisation of such an Exhibition is a sufficient answer to those people who say that the Indian Congress deals only with the political, and does not care about the material, condition of the people. In connection with this particular Exhibition there will be a most interesting new feature, and that will be the part taken by Indian ladies in the matter. This is quite a new departure; there is to be a very interesting section of Indian women's domestic industries and a committee of Bombay ladies has been formed, and has corresponded with all parts of India. As a result, we expect to have a very unique and interesting exhibition of women's domestic industries, and in this connection I should say that we have been very much gratified by the interest shown by English ladies in this movement. When our Chairman was proposing the health of the Royal Family, I gave an extra cheer, because several of the illustrious ladies of that family have kindly given their patronage to the movement, and are sending out exhibits of their own workmanship. (*Cheers.*) There is one more document to which I should like to refer, and that is the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, to which our Chairman alluded, and of which both he and I were members. We had a Minority Report signed by Mr. Naoroji, Mr. Caine, and myself. I would commend that Report to your special attention, because it represents the ideas, not only of the three individuals who signed it but because it was drawn up after thorough consideration of the matter in conjunction with delegates from India. Among the suggestions contained in it

is one which I think very important. I have referred to the friction that there is between the European officials and the educated classes. It is very much to be regretted that, as a great deal of that friction arises from the fact that they are both competing for Government offices. the friction is increased every time an appointment becomes vacant, and there is a struggle for it. We made a suggestion with a view to putting an end to this friction. It was proposed to put it down in this way. It has often been said that in order to carry on the administration of India a minimum of European agency is necessary. Suppose we accept that as a fact of the situation, then we ask that there should be not only a minimum, but also a maximum of European agency—that there should be a certain budget allotment for the payment of the whole European agency, and that should not be exceeded. If an appointment is given to a European, that would necessitate a corresponding appointment being given to an Indian at the next vacancy. I do not think the European service need fear that they will not receive consideration for good service from the Indian people. I may say that on almost the only occasion on which I seriously differed from my educated friends in Poona was an occasion on which I wanted the Government College to be handed over entirely to Indian agency. At that time my Indian friends thought it would be better that the College should remain for a time at least under its European management. Surely that shows that they want the best men that can be found for the offices to be filled. What I would like to see would be more co-operation between the Europeans and educated Indians. We had an interesting example of that in the case of my brother-in-law, Mr. E. Percival, who, I am sorry to say, we have recently lost

who was joint-administrator with that wise Indian statesman, Mr. Gaurishankar, in the successful administration of the Bhavnagar State. I would like to see every British district administered like a well-ordered Native State, and I do not think it could be better done than by having joint administrators—an English official, and an educated Indian—the Raja and his Diwan—who should have representative Councils to advise them. The result would be that the districts, instead of being crushed as now by iron centralisation, would have the same happiness and prosperity as obtain in well-administered Native States like Mysore and Gondal. I thank you for the kind way in which you have listened to my remarks. I would only add one hope, and that is, that when my friend Sir Henry Cotton has presided over the Indian National Congress, the Viceroy will receive from his hands as President the resolutions which have been arrived at. I can see no possible reason against that being done. If the smallest municipality in India is allowed to present an address to the Viceroy, and receive in return a courteous answer, why should not the same consideration be extended to the greatest assembly in the country, which, after 20 years' consideration, is putting forward the matured and most moderate and reasonable demands of the people? I say that would afford a very valuable and useful opportunity for the Viceroy to tell us what is being done by the Government in the various directions referred to; to tell us if he thinks our proposals are unreasonable, and if reasonable, what steps will be taken to carry them into effect. Such action would bring credit to the Government of India, and would at the same time produce a feeling of the liveliest satisfaction throughout the Empire. (*Prolonged cheers.*)

PEACE, ECONOMY, AND REFORM IN INDIA.

[*At a Meeting of the Hampstead Peace and Arbitration Society, held at the Town Hall on February, May* 27, 1905, *under the presidency of Sir Henry Cotton, Sir William Wedderburn delivered a lecture on " Peace, Economy and Reform in India ":*]

Sir William said : I thank Sir Henry Cotton for the kind terms in which he has introduced me tbis evening. It was my privilege to accompany him to India, and to hear his address to the Bombay Congress. By general consent that address was a model of what such an address should be ; moderate, sympathetic, statesmanlike. Again, a few nights ago, I heard Sir Henry speak at the National Liberal Club, on " The Indian Problem." He then described the reactionary policy of Lord Curzon, who, as head of the great Indian military bureaucracy, stands for aggression abroad, and repression at Home. Sir Henry also explained the attitude of the Indian National Congress, which is entirely opposed to such a policy ; and which voices the unanimous feeling of the Indian people in favour of Peace, Economy, and Reform. The British people are the ultimate arbiters of India's destiny ; and the " Indian Problem " is, how should the British people decide as between these opposing forces ? I submit that the only right and safe solution of the problem is a decision in favour of Peace, Economy, and Reform : the will of the people should prevail.

This same struggle, between centralised officialism on the one hand, and the will of the people on the other, is

going on all over the civilised world; and curiously enough, it has just at the present moment reached an acute stage in countries widely separated, both by distance and circumstances; I mean, in Ireland, in Russia, and in India. In Ireland we have Dublin Castle pitted against the Nationalist organisation, which represents the wishes of the Irish people. There cannot be much doubt as to what the end will be as regards Ireland. A trumpet blast is being sounded in Parliament, and soon the walls of Jericho, that is, of Dublin Castle, will come tumbling down. I will read to you the amendment on the Address moved by Mr. John Redmond; and if you will be so good as to substitute "India" for "Ireland" and "Indian people" for Irish people," you will have a fair statement of the political situation in India. The amendment represents to His Majesty "that the present system of Government in Ireland is in opposition to the will of the Irish people, and gives them no voice in the managment of their own affairs; that the system is consequently ineffective and extravagantly costly, does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population, and is productive of universal discontent and unrest, and has proved to be incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people."

Again, in Russia we have the Czar, as the head of a military bureaucracy, hitherto all powerful, confronted by a vast peasantry and proletariat, demanding representative institutions. Here we have an object-lesson of official autocracy, pure and simple; bearing its natural fruit of failure abroad, and rebellion at home.

In India the outward conditions are not dissimlar, but the attitude of the people is very different. We have in India, as in Russia, an all-powerful and irresponsible

Military bureaucracy. At the head of it is Lord Curzon, who is a sort of Czar; only perhaps, more so. Here also there is a vast population desirous of having a voice in the managment of their own affairs. But at this point the resemblance ends; for whereas the popular demand in Russia is leading to bloodshed and revolution, the Indian people, in stating their case through their Congress representatives, are respectful, law-abiding, and constitutional. What they want is to have an end of aggression and repression, and to obtain a revival of the policy of Lord Lawrence and Lord Ripon; peace abroad, and progress at home. That is the gist of the Congress resolutions. For twenty years they have reiterated their petition, year by year. During that period they have suffered many things; from war, famine, and pestilence. But through it all they have remained patient, orderly, and loyal to the British connection. Surely, from mere compassion, a humane ruler should listen with sympathy to the tale of their woe. But there are more solid reasons than sentiment why foreign rulers, responsible for the lives and happiness of so vast a population, should welcome the co-operation of the most experienced and influential leaders of the Indian community. When I was a boy we lived in Italy, and I remember well the attitude of the Italian population towards the Austrian Government in Venetia. They absolutely boycotted every Austrian official, and made administration impossible. How different is the attitude of the Indian population to their foreign rulers! Instead of making administration impossible, they accept British rule as the basis of the Congress programme; they show how its defects may be remedied so as to make it popular and strong; and they believe that it may become a truly national government, if we are really guided, as we profess to be, by

the noble principles laid down in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858.

Such being the case, is it not strange that, instead of warmly welcoming the Congress movement, the officials at Calcutta and Westminster should regard it with distrust and antagonism? The explanation is to be found in the natural antagonism that exists, all the world over, between centralised officialism and popular aspirations. The more completed the centralisation, the greater the alienation. Not long ago Lord G. Hamilton, as Secretary of State, admitted the increasing unpopularity of our Indian government. I will briefly indicate how grievances arise from our centralised system. As you are aware, some 80 per cent. of the Indian population consists of peasant cultivators and their dependents, grouped in self-governing village communities, something like our rural parishes; and in order to be prosperous and happy all that these little republics ask from the central power is to be taxed in moderation, and according to custom; to be protected from external violence and to be let alone in the management of their internal affairs. Unfortunately, this last condition is exactly the one which an active centralised administration, framed on European models finds it impossible to fulfil. In the early times of our rule the good old native system continued, the Collector of the District representing the Government in all departments and dealing with the villages through the hereditary village-officers and servants. But of late years the great centralised departments have arisen, and taken all power out of the hands of the local Collector, Police, Forest, Salt, Excise, Public Works, Survey, Irrigation, Sanitation, Registration, Vaccination, and so on; their name is legion. Each of these departments has its director at headquarters, in Calcutta, Madras,

or Bombay, as the case may be, where he has the ear of the Government: while, far away, in the rural districts, the departments are represented by a swarm of ill-paid and hungry native subordinates, who prowl about the villages, and gradually fatten themselves by plunder and extortion. Among all these departments, and among all these petty oppressors, the life of the poorer cultivator may be likened to that of a toad under a harrow, so jarred is he and upset in all his dearest interests and prejudices. It can be easily understood how such a system produces increasing irritation and unrest throughout the country. The system is a regular manufactory of grievances; and for these grievances there is practically no means of redress. The local Collector, who used to be the "Gharib Parwar," the "Protector of the poor," is now powerless. If he comes into collision with the department, he is sure to get the worst of it. I deliberately repeat, there is for the Indians practically no redress of grievances. But you will say, does not an appeal lie to the higher authorities in India, to the Secretary of State, and to Parliament? Yes, an appeal lies; but in order to understand how futile is any hope of redress, we must remember who the men are to whom the appeal is made. The Indian Civil Service includes good material. But unfortunately the spirit of "Imperialism," and the system of promotion, do not tend to place in high office men of independence and strong convictions. The men who most easily climb to high office are those whose backs are supple, who are not burdened with hampering convictions, and who are equally ready to promote the policy of a Lord Lytton or a Lord Ripon; getting thus two steps on the ladder of promotion for every single step obtained by their rivals, whose principles prevent them from zealously

promoting a policy of which they disapprove. It thus results that many of those who reach the heights of Simla are tainted with Balfourism, that is, they are men without "settled convictions"; and they there form a clique, the "Simla clique," adverse alike to the rank and file of the service, and to the interests of the Indian people. Such men are not of the stuff to fight the big departments, or the powerful interests; so, when the complaint of grievance comes before them, the weaker usually goes to the wall. Then what hope is there from an appeal from Simla to the Secretary of State at the India Office? The Secretary of State, poor man, is himself generally quite ignorant of Indian affairs; and he sits surrounded by a Council mainly recruited from the Simla clique and their friends; so that the appeal to the Secretary of State in Council practically means an appeal to the very officials who are the authors of the grievance. As regards the supposed control by Parliament, I can speak from seven years' sad experience in the House of Commons. I say advisedly that practically no control at all is exercised by either House of Parliament; and that when Indians suffer wrong, whether it is an individual, or a class, or the whole people, there exists no machinery through which justice can be obtained. The theory, of course, is that the Secretary of State for India is responsible to Parliament. But this is altogether a delusion. Having at his back the Government majority, he is, in Indian matters, not the servant but the master of the House of Commons. No doubt, also, he is supposed to occupy a quasi-judicial position, and to give impartial advice to Parliament, as the ultimate Court of Appeal; but instead of this, when he speaks in the House of Commons, he comes forward as the champion of the official hierarchy, against which the complaints are made.

Deriving all his views and information from the officials at the India Office, he becomes naturally the apologist of all official acts, and resents every complaint as a reflection upon the administration of which he is the head. Under these cicumstances, what can an independent member do, even in such scandalous cases as those of the Natu brothers and Mr. Tilak? To the average member Indian grievances are distasteful; and, apparently without shame, even a Cabinet Minister confesses to "colossal ignorance" of Indian affairs. With a few noble exceptions, also, little help is obtained from the public Press, which finds material for cheap jocularity in the fact that the House of Commons grossly neglects its duty towards India, and at once empties its benches if questions affecting 250 millions of our unrepresented fellow-subjects are to be discussed. Indeed, as regards Indian affairs, British journalists appear to have abdicated their function as independent monitors of the public. You will have noticed how contemptuously Mr. Wyndham referred to the Press in his celebrated letter to Sir Antony MacDonnell. He said that he would "ask Lord George Hamilton to see that the Press" did what was required. How are the mighty fallen, when the great organs of public opinion are treated as being at the beck and call of the India Office.

I think I have shown that there is no provision for the redress of those grievances which must necessarily arise under an autocratic foreign rule. Nor is there any prospect of improvement in this respect. On the contrary, the tendency of an imperialistic autocracy is to be always increasing its power, always encroaching upon the liberties of the subject. We must bear in mind that with our official system the interests of the rulers and the ruled are not at all identical. The primary interests of the people

are Peace, Economy, and Reform; which mean for them freedom from the waste of militarism, reduction of taxation, and redress of grievances. But the professional interest of the civil and military services are to be found, not so much in peace as in territorial expansion, with their natural accompaniments of titles and decorations, and the multiplication of highly-paid appointments. To officials, economy and reform are naturally distasteful, as representing reduction of emoluments, and curtailment of authority. How can we expect them, as a class, to meet the popular wishes? During Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty we have striking instances of the imperialistic and retrogressive activity in the invasion of Tibet; in the attack upon municipal self-government at Calcutta, in the Education Act which destroys the independence of the Universities; in the measures against the freedom of the Press; and in the extraordinary refusal to allow an enquiry into the economic condition of the famine villages.

Rebuffed by the Viceroy in India, the Congress desires to make its appeal to the British people, and intends to send delegates to England to plead the cause of India. The delegates will specially ask (1) for a revival of the old Parliamentary enquiries into the administration of India, which used to be held every twenty years, before the renewal of the Company's Charter; and (2) that the salary of the Secretary of State for India may be placed on the British estimates. Above all, we want strong and sincere Liberals, to hold the posts of Secretary of State, and Viceroy; men of the spirit of Lord Ripon, not of Sir Henry Fowler. And to support them, there should be at least one Indian member in the Viceroy's Executive Council, while several representative Indians should be appointed to the Council of the Secretary of State. If

these measures were adopted, and there is no reason why a Liberal Ministry should not adopt them, a good beginning would have been made towards giving poor India the benefits of Peace, Economy, and Reform. I commend the Congress efforts to your kindly sympathy and support.

CONGRESS DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND.

[*At the Twentieth Congress at Bombay, in* 1904, *Sir William moved a Resolution on a Congress Deputation to England. The Resolution ran as follows* :]

That, looking to the near approach of a General Election in England, and to the vital importance at this crisis, of bringing the claims of India before the Electors before the Parliamentary Candidates, and before the political leaders, it is expedient that the Congress should depute trustworthy and experienced representatives nominated by the different Provinces to be present in England for this purpose, before and during the election ; and that a fund of not less than Rs. 30,000 should be raised to meet the necessary expenses of such Deputation.

Sir William said :—Mr. President, Brother-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.—Fifteen years ago I had the honour to address you from the presidential chair. You gave me a kind welcome then, and your welcome now has been no less kind—(*hear, hear*), —whether in this pavilion or in the streets of your great and beautiful city. (*Hear, hear.*) Gentlemen, it is not in the nature of the Indian people to forget their old friends. (*Hear, hear.*) I now come before you as a delegate and as a representative of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress,—(*hear, hear*)—and I bring to you messages from your friends there, (*hear, hear,*) and I also hope to say a few words with regard to the work in England in the Congress cause. The first message I have

is from your Grand Old Man, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji (*hear, hear*)—a message of hope and encouragement. He asks you to be united and patient and persistent. (*Hear, hear.*) These are his words, but I say that still more important than this message is the very bright example of what he himself has done. (*Hear, hear.*) It shows half a century of self-sacrifice and devotion to the public welfare. (*Hear, hear.*) Then, gentlemen, I bring to you the good wishes of your friends Mr. Allen Hume (*loud cheers*), and Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee (*loud cheers*), who were the fathers and the founders of the Indian National Congress. (*Hear, hear.*) I know that they would gladly have accepted your kind invitation to be present amongst you, had not the weight of years and serious illness made it impossible for them. And then, again, gentlemen, I have a message from the well-beloved Marquis of Ripon. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*) This is what he wrote to me when I was leaving England. These are his words :

> I shall follow with great interest the proceedings of the Congress at Bombay, (*cheers*) and shall hope to hear a full account of its doings on your return. (*Hear, hear.*) If you have the opportunity, I should like you to say that my interest in India is as keen as ever, (*cheers*), and that I watch with careful attention all that goes on there. (*Hear, hear.*) I shall ever feel deeply grateful for the regard so often manifested for me by the people of India. (*Cheers*).

And, gentlemen, with the name of Lord Ripon I should like to couple the name of another wise and steadfast friend, who, alas, is no longer with us, I mean Lord Hobhouse, (*loud cheers,*) who gave us one of the last of his acts and words in wishing us Godspeed on our mission—(*Hear, hear*)—when we left the shores of England. Gentlemen, I should like to say a few words with regard to the Congress work in England. I believe all of you have read the article that I wrote in the "India" under the heading

of "India's Golden Opportunity," and I ask you now to grasp that "golden opportunity." (*Hear, hear.*) You know that all of us, in India and England alike, have suffered from the reactionary policy of the Government during recent years, but it is certain, as certain as any human forecast can be, that that Government will soon be swept away at the next general election, (*hear, hear*), and then there will be a Government more favourable to popular aspirations. (*Hear, hear.*) India has been the chief sufferer from that reactionary Government, so she may be the first to have the benefit of the change if she is up and doing (*hear, hear*) and urging her claims before the British nation at and before the coming general election. (*Hear, hear*). You know that Shakespeare tells us that "there is a tide in the affairs of men," and there is not the least doubt that the tide of British public opinion has turned, and is running now strongly in the opposite direction. Therefore, now is the time for you to act, so that this may lead on to fortune. I believe, there are some few of you who are despairing and despondent, a few who say it is no use struggling. You must remember that for twenty years you have been labouring at the oars and working against the tide, and now that the tide has turned, would it not be the height of folly to throw down your oars, (*hear, hear*) just at the time when you may hope to bring your vessel safe into harbour? I say this is not the time to throw down your oars? (*Hear hear.*) I say a thousand times it is now the occasion for great efforts being made to take advantage of such an opportunity as that which presents itself to us and which cannot occur again in the present generation. (*Hear, hear.*)

Now, gentlemen, to refer again to that article. In that article I reminded you that British public opinion

does not directly either make laws or appoint the high officers of State, but indirectly British public opinion does make laws and does appoint men to high offices of State. Public opinion in England influences the electors in regard to the constitution of the House of Commons. The House of Commons supports the Government, and it is the Government that appoints the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy who rules over you. Therefore, if you can influence British public opinion, you may have what you want in the way of laws and with regard to the high officers who exercise this great power among you. I repeat, therefore, now is your opportunity to let the British nation and the British public know what laws you want and what is the sort of Secretary of State you want. (*Hear, hear*). I think you may let them know that you don't want a Secretary of State like Sir Henry Fowler, (*groans and hisses*) and that you want a Secretary of State like the noble Marquis of Ripon. (*Cheers and hear, hear.*) Then, as regards laws that you want, what should be the prayer of your petition before the British nation? Now when an engineer attacks a fortress two points are mainly considered. The first point is the key of the position, and the second point is as to the best point to attack, which is the point of least resistance; and I give you as my opinion that there are two measures which will fulfil both these conditions. What you want, according to my view, is a revival of the old custom of periodical enquiry every twenty years into the whole administration of India, (*hear, hear*) such as was always held before the Charter was renewed, and from which dates every great reform which you are at present enjoying. The second important point, which has formed the subject of the last resolution, is the placing of the salary of

the Secretary of State on the estimates, so that it may be discussed in the House of Commons. (*Hear, hear.*) Those two great advantages can be easily gained, because the people of Great Britain understand the meaning of these two points which will enable Parliament to exercise proper control over the Government of India and perform the duty it owes to the people of this country. (*Hear, hear.*) These two points are the key of the whole position. Then, as regards persons whom you are to send Home, the proposal is that India should send some of her best sons to England on this important occasion to plead her cause and to make her cause known. (*Hear, hear.*) You already have a nucleus in England. You have some friends on the British Committee who are prepared to co-operate with and help your Grand Old Man in England. (*Hear, hear.*) India should send her foremost sons to undertake this great and patriotic duty. (*Hear, hear.*) Of course, a certain amount of money will be required, and that is mentioned in the resolution that you have before you, but I don't say anything about money just now, because my experience of the Indian people is that, if necessary, money will be forthcoming if it is really wanted to carry out an object to the great benefit of the Indian people both in the present and in the future. (*Hear, hear.*) I beg to move this resolution. (*Loud cheers.*)

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

[*In reply to the Address of Welcome presented by the citizens of Madras on the 6th January* 1905, *Sir William made the following speech :—*]

In this Address you have referred to the impoverished condition of the masses of this country, and you have referred to the interest that I have taken in the ryot, in the great rural population of India. It is quite true, I may say, that for nearly half a century my anxious thought has been for the great mass of the rural population. (*Cheers.*) The great problem is this, the terrible indebtedness of the agriculturist, an indebtedness so great that it paralyses his energies, it enslaves him, it deprives him of his hereditary acres. That is the greatest misfortune that can happen to the country. This great indebtedness has led, I regret to say, to the destruction of his credit. When a man owes more than he can ever hope to pay, how can he get loans when he is in great difficulties ? The consequence is that this excessive indebtedness is, I believe, the main cause of the great mortality during famines. When crops failed in former times a man had some little ornaments remaining to him and he had credit with the money-lender, with the grain-dealer : but now owing to his excessive indebtedness, if the harvest fails, he has no money to buy food, no credit to borrow money, and unless he is fed by the State at the expense of the taxpayer, he must die in starvation. That is a terrible state of things. I may say that famine has not been a famine of food, but has been a famine of

poverty. In the worst times of the famine and in the worst localities there was always food to be got if the people had only the money to buy it with or had the credit to borrow the money. Therefore, I say this terrible indebtedness is the great cause of the famine mortality.

Gentlemen, with your permission, I would very briefly refer to the efforts which at different periods I have made in order to deal with this terrible evil of rural indebtedness. From both of these things I had considerable hopes; but I am sorry to say in both cases those hopes were not realised. (The Chairman; for the present.) For the present, I am glad to see, the Chairman tells us. The first was in the year 1882 when our beloved Marquis of Ripon (*cheers*) was the Viceroy of India. At that time we made a scheme to deal with the indebtedness of the taluq of Purandar in the Poona Collectorate. Both the ryots and money-lenders agreed to the arrangements we proposed. The scheme was to make a settlement of the old debts upon an equitable basis with the consent of all parties; the State was to advance the amount of these debts. Having thus cleared the way, we were to establish an experimental Agricultural Bank in that taluq in order that the ryots might receive abundant advances at a moderate rate of interest. To this scheme the ryots had agreed, the money-lenders had agreed—they were to become shareholders in the Bank—the bankers had agreed, the landholders had agreed and we had many experienced Government pensioners who were willing freely and without payment to administer the affairs of the Bank. Not only that, but the Government of Bombay agreed to this scheme and the scheme went up to the Government of India: and I am glad to say that the scheme was not only approved by the Viceroy, Lord Ripon, but also by his Finance Minister.

Major Baring, who is now Lord Cromer. Lord Cromer, when he was satisfied that the people desired the scheme, that it was on good business lines, and that it was likely to be a poineer that might spread to other parts of the country, was willing to provide the hard cash to make the settlement between the ryots and the money-lenders. He was willing to advance no less than Rs. 6½ lakhs in order to make a complete settlement of the old debts.

This having been agreed upon, a despatch was sent in the year 1882, to the Secretary of State for India in London, asking for his sanction for this great and useful experiment; and the Government of India said "we cannot see that any harm can possibly come from this, and very great benefit might accrue to the whole country." I am sorry to say—I am not going to call any hard names, I do not think that any hard names ever break one's opponent's bones nor do any good to one's cause—I shall only say that I regret to say that the Secretary of State for India, after a wearisome correspondence making difficulties and asking questions that could not be answered—we wanted to make an experiment and see how it worked; a man cannot learn to swim until he goes into water, and in the same way we wanted to make an experiment to see how a Bank could be worked, I am sorry to say that after considerable correspondence, the Secretary of State for India ended by giving a negative to the whole scheme without giving any proper reason for his refusal. (*Shame.*) That was in 1882. Nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed and now at last, after twenty-two years the Government of India have discovered that Agricultural Banks would be a good thing for the ryots of the country. If they had found out that twenty-two years ago, we should have found that Lord Cromer instead of employing

his genius and ability in rescuing the ryots of Egypt from their indebtedness, would have employed his genius and capacity to have done that for the ryots of the Empire of India. I have seen the proposals of the Government of India for Agricultural Banks, but it appears to me that they are not satisfactory. They are too much centralised. They depend upon centralisation instead of being adapted to the special needs of the people in the locality. They are too doctrinaire ; they are not practical enough and I very much fear that they have not very much hope. But I am glad, at any rate, that they have taken that one step in twenty-two years that they discovered that Agricultural Banks would be a good thing for the people. (*Laughter*).

The second matter to which I would draw your attention is the Memorial, the very largely and influentially signed Memorial, of the Indian Famine Union, asking for a detailed economic inquiry into the condition of typical villages that have been suffering from famines. The reason that we desired that enquiry was because of the irreconcilable difference of opinion between the officials and the non-officials with regard to the real condition of the Indian ryots; in the Annual Reports we are always being told of the increasing prosperity of the ryot. If he has been increasing in prosperity every year since I remember official Reports, he ought to be a very fat man by this time. (*Laughter*). But the non-official opinion is that he is a very poor man, a mere starveline and a victim of famine and plague. Until we decide what the condition of a patient is, how can we possibly apply any remedy? If you have a sick man, we first make a diagnosis of his case and then we know how to apply the remedy. We, therefore, begged the Govern-

ment of India to make this enquiry. I think I may say that never was a petition more influentially signed, beginning with the Archbishop of Canterbury and going down through every grade of society. I am sorry to say that the Secretary of State and the Government of India both refused to make that enquiry; and I see that in the last day or two, Sir Edward Law has spoken of the general wave of prosperity that has been passing over the country during the last three years. I say this is a statement which ought not to be made unless there is a full enquiry before independent authorities to ascertain what is the real condition of the people. Now this enquiry was refused for various reasons. One was that it would take up too much time of the Government officials. But I have been able to point out to them that Mr. Thorburn, the Financial Commissioner in the Punjab, made such an enquiry in no less than 742 Punjab villages. He completed the enquiry, I think, in six weeks and the whole cost of it was only £300. If that is the case, why should the Government shrink making the enquiry we ask for? Another ground was that it would raise unfounded hopes in the agriculturists' minds. But in Sir Antony Macdonnell's great Famine Report, he said that one of the greatest evils which the country suffered from was the despairing despondency of the agriculturists. The first thing he asked to take was the motto "put heart into the people"; that is what is wanted. Therefore, to raise hopes in the minds of the people is not a bad thing, but on the other hand, a very good thing.

Lastly, they told us a most extaordinary thing; they said that, if the enquiry were made, it would be intensely resented by the people. Now, I think, that it is an inquiry which the people have always been asking for; that it will not be resented by the people is shown by the fact that the

Indian National Congress, which represents the people has twice made the request to Government that the enquiry should be made in accordance with the recommendations of the Indian Famine Union's Memorial (*Cheers*). Now, gentlemen, it is true that for the last few years India has been suffering from many and great misfortunes, from the evil of war, from plague and from famine. But for all that I do not despair of the future of the Indian people, because you have many great natural advantages. You have in India a fine soil and a fine climate; you have an agricultural population which is industrious, which is skilful and which is law-abiding. Now these are all elements of prosperity, if only they get fair play. If we are to regain prosperity there must be co-operation between the rulers and the ruled. There must be mutual confidence and mutual goodwill. I am glad to hear that in the matter of grievances of the ryots in this Presidency His Excellency the Governor has favoured conferences of ryots (*cheers.*) : that he has been using his endeavours to come into direct communication with them and hear from them, at first hand, what their own grievances are. (*Cheers and applause*). I am very glad that he has shown this desire to meet the people; but that feeling is not universal among the official classes throughout India; and I think it is the great mission of the Indian National Congress and of the educated class generally, to act as interpreters between the rulers and the ruled, and to promote that confidence and good will to which I referred. That has been the work of the Congress. In your Address you referred to the small beginnings of the Congress in 1885. I am proud to say that I was present at the birth of the Congress in 1885 (*cheers*); and again at Bombay in 1889 I had the pleasure

of seeing it a very strong and healthy child; and a few days ago it was my privilege to be present under the presidency of our good friend Sir Henry Cotton. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*) I would be very glad to tell my friend how very kindly you received his name. (*Loud cheers.*) Under our friend Sir Henry Cotton, the Congress has reached a very strong and healthy manhood. I believe it is to celebrate its coming of age and that its next session is to be held in the holy city of Benares.

I have spoken of your Governor; and I am glad to say that in Bombay the Congress met with exceeding kindness from His Excellency Lord Lamington. (*Cheers.*) As you know, Bombay is a very small island, and space is a very difficult thing to get for our great Congress pandal; and I am glad to say that His Excellency gave to the Congress the very best site in the whole of Bombay. (*Cheers.*) Not only did he do that, but, in the most generous and sympathetic way, he opened the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition which was promoted and managed by the Indian National Congress. I believe that these acts of the Governor will go far to bring about that mutual goodwill to which I have referred. No doubt the task of a foreign Government to administer a great Empire like this is a very difficult one, however well-intentioned it may be. In fact, it is an impossibility, unless they take the people of the country into their confidence and unless they get their help.

I am glad to say that the result of the Congress of 1889, when our good friend the late Mr. Bradlaugh came to India—the immediate and direct result of that Congress and of Mr. Bradlaugh's manful and strenuous support of your interests in the House of Commons was the improvement in your Legislative Councils, the introduction of more

or less representative members and the giving of power of interpellation. Speaking as I am, surrounded by those who have exercised these privileges that were then accorded, I may say that nothing could be better than the influence that has been exercised by that concession. I have been watching carefully the members of the Viceregal and Local Legislative Councils, who have been called to these Councils by the Government and who have been sent there by the voices of their fellow-countrymen. I think that the results that have been achieved should encourage the Government and the people at Home to make very distinct further concessions in the same direction, to make the representation larger and more real, to give the members the power to move amendments, to divide upon the Budget and to record their opinions in a suitable manner. I think that the wise counsels that are placed at the disposal of the Government should encourage the Government to appoint at least one Indian Member to the Executive Council of the Viceroy. The Government and people from a very distant island must be very much in the dark, and I cannot imagine a greater advantage than that they should have the particular benefit not only in the Legislative Council but in the Executive Council of gentlemen, like my friend the Chairman, by their side, to warn them of dangers and pitfalls, and to point the way to the good measures that will benefit the people.

Almost more important than that, I should say, is that the representative members of the Viceregal and other Legislative Councils should be able to send representatives to sit in London on the Council of the Secretary of State for India. The Secretary of State for India is the final authority; he should exercise judicial discretion in

every question that comes before him. He is simply surrounded by officials, Anglo-Indian officials, many of whom are the very ones who decided the cases in which you wish to appeal to the Secretary of State. I cannot imagine anything more advantageous for the Secretary of State than to have beside him trusted and experienced representatives sent from India, and who will tell him also the Indian view of Indian affairs. That will enable him to treat the matter judicially, to hear both sides, and to give a judicial decision in the matter of your grievances. I see in a letter addressed to the *Times of India*, our good friend, Mr. Samuel Smith, (*cheers*) has strongly urged that reform. I may say that during the seven years that I was in the House of Commons—it was rather a voice crying in the wilderness in regard to India—I had no more faithful, kinder and more warm-hearted supporter than Mr. Samuel Smith. (*Cheers.*)

Gentlemen, to sum up, if you are to have any real improvement in the general administration of India, the Government should take the Indian National Congress into their confidence (*cheers*) as representative of the intelligence of the country and as a body which is able to tell the Government what the needs, the wishes and the aspirations of the Indian people are. By the blessing of Providence we have a great and good man as our King Emperor—(*Loud and continued Cheers*)—(At this stage three cheers were called for the King Emperor and they were very heartily given) a great and good man, a lover of peace and concord. He has been well-named by some Edward, the Peace-maker. (*Cheers*). There is no living man who has done so much for the peace of the world, whether it be in South Africa or in Ireland or on the continent of Europe. As regards India, he has

confirmed the Great Queen's Proclamation of 1858, which is the Magna Charta of the Indian people. I say that we, as the loyal subjects of the King Emperor, call upon his servants in this country to maintain the spirit of that Proclamation and to fulfil the pledge they have given. I say that, if the British Government maintain the spirit that is breathed in that Proclamation and fulfil the pledges, not superficially, but thoroughly, as they were meant to be fulfilled, it would cease to be a foreign rule, and will become a national Government because, if it does that, the Government will be based upon the only true foundation —upon the prosperity, contentment, happiness and affections of the Indian people. (*Cheers*).

There are one or two practical remarks to which, I hope, you will kindly extend your indulgence. The first is with reference to the deputation to England. I regard that as the most important matter. I consider that the British people, according to my experience from all the meetings that I have held and from all the opinions expressed, are sincerely anxious that justice should be done to India. (*Cheers.*) If I did not think that, I should not say it. But they are very ignorant of India; what they need is that the needs of India and the wishes of India should be placed before them at first-hand by the very best of your sons, especially at the present crisis. There is now the opening of a great General Election. Both in India and in England we have suffered much from the reactionary Government. It is almost as certain as anything can be that that Government is going to be swept away at the next General Election, and that a Government more friendly to popular aspirations will take its place. The great thing is that, while the people are interested in public affairs, and

when important meetings are being held, Indians should be there to put in their claim in order that India that has suffered from that re-actionary policy more than any other part of the Empire, might be the first to get a remedy when it could possibly be given. I want these gentlemen to be there to address meetings ; I wish them to get pledges from the candidates when they are up for election, that they will pay attention to Indian affairs and will see justice done to India. I don't think that any candidate when he is asked, on his platfrom, will refuse to give that pledge ; and it will be our object to see that these pledges are carried out.

Secondly, I am anxious that you should send men of weight and experience, who will speak quietly to the political leaders in England, who will explain to them how moderate, how reasonable and how safe are all the concessions that you ask for. I hope, therefore, that you will send men who will impress upon the people, the leaders of the people of England in that way. You have impressed me with those feelings long ago. But, I want you to impress those who will be at the seat of power in a very short time. As regards the particular benefits that you want at present, your representatives should ask those that are to be in power that they should, above all, give you a good and sympathetic Secretary of State. If you have that, many other things will follow. Of the measures that are needed, two I will name, which, I think, are the key which will unlock the door of many other reforms. I mean the revival of the old custom of having a thorough enquiry into the administration of India every twenty years. Almost all the benefits that you enjoy arose from those enquiries, which took place in former times every twenty years before the renewal of the Charter. If an Act were passed to

make that enquiry compulsory, you will find that your rulers will be very busy in putting their House into order before the date of that enquiry. That will enable the British people to take stock of this great dependency. I am perfectly certain that the result will ultimately be to admit the people of India, as they deserve to be admitted, to the full rights of the citizenship of this great Empire. The third important point is, that the salary of the Secretary of State for India, like the salaries of the other Secretaries of State, should not be paid by the Indian people but should be paid by the British people, and should be placed upon the Estimates, so that it will enable all grievances to be brought forward at the time when the salary is voted. That was one of the resolutions passed by the Congress a few days ago at Bombay. You will find, I am sure, some good and true inhabitants in Madras among your experienced and trusted friends to go and perform this great duty for you in England.

Sir William then dwelt on the importance of the paper *India* whose existence was essentially necessary in order to educate English public opinion on matters Indian. He then said: We are asking the people of India to subscribe for at least 1,000 copies to be distributed gratis in a way that will most benefit your interests. The distribution that we propose would allot 200 copies to the Madras Presidency.

The only other matter that I would take the liberty of speaking to you about is, organisation amongst yourselves. The Congress meets once a year and does most valuable work. It establishes general principles in which you all agree; and it lays down the great reforms that you desire. After having passed the Resolutions, it disperses, and

there is no machinery to do its work during the year. No political work can be carried on properly on such a basis as that. I must ask you to form political local organisations all over the Presidency; and you must educate, educate, educate if you wish to make your people able to appreciate the benefits of reform and to get these reforms from the British people. Not long ago a benevolent lady, when she was carrying out a religious ceremony, connected with her domestic affairs, sent us a handsome donation, because she said that it was a religious duty to give a portion of the money that was being spent towards the National Congress. (*Cheers.*) I commend that example to you. I would rather that the National Congress should be supported by small contributions from a large number of people than that a few rich people should be called upon to make large sacrifices. I hope, therefore, that that example may be followed, and that the contribution to the national cause should be considered one of the ways in which a good Hindu and a good Mussalman gives his support to Mother India. Mr. Chairman, allow me again to thank you for the distinguished honour that you have done me. I came to Bombay to meet old friends. I come to Madras and I have had great pleasure in making a number of new friends and I sincerely hope that in the work that we may be doing, some here and some in England, we may all work together in harmony and with zeal—and with the results, but the results are not with us—and whether we succeeded or not, let us feel that we have done our duty, and that nothing has been left undone. (*Cheers.*)

ENTERTAINMENT TO MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI.

[*The many Admirers of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, both English and Indian, entertained him at complimentary breakfast on Tuesday, November* 20, 1906, *at the Westminster Palace Hotel, in honour of his election for the third time to preside over the Indian National Congress. Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., presided. Sir W. Wedderburn rose at the conclusion of the breakfast and said* :—]

Gentlemen,—We are met to-day to wish our friend Mr. Naoroji God-speed in his mission to India. He is the Grand Old Man of India; and it is not easy to exaggerate the importance of the duty he has now undertaken. As you are aware, public feeling in India at this moment is in a somewhat excited state; a moderating influence is required; and to meet this need the presence of our friend, as head of the Indian National Congress, is considered important. To quote the words of Hamlet, "The time is out of joint," and by general consent Mr. Naoroji is the one man considered "born to set it right." The call has come to him on account of the principles which he represents; but even more so on account of his unique personality; his pure unselfishnes, his high courage, and his lifelong devotion to the public good. Gentlemen, I have said that the state of public feeling in India is critical. Twenty years of repression and reaction, culminating in the Partition of Bengal, has caused many to despair of the future. They declare that constitutional agitation has proved a failure, that appeals to British justice and sympathy are unheard, and that nothing is left but passive resistance and distrust of the British Government.

On the other hand, the older leaders of the Indian National Congress preach patience. A democratic House of Commons, in sympathy with popular aspirations, has placed in power a democratic Government, and the destinies of India are in the hands of a Secretary of State of noble antecedents. I beg, therefore, to say—"Wait—give Mr. Morley time." Public feeling in India is at the parting of two ways. It was at this critical moment that a call came from India to Mr. Naoroji; and such is the veneration in which he is held throughout India that when his consent to accept the office of President, if elected, became known, all sections joined in welcoming him. You will, therefore, understand what the personality of our friend means to the millions of his fellow-countrymen. The election of Mr. Naoroji has been unanimous. He does not go out as taking sides with any party or section; he wishes to go quite unfettered; so that on his arrival in India he may take such action as seems best, under the circumstances, in fulfilling his arduous mission. Such being the case, I know, we shall best consult his wishes by not discussing any controversial points. Some of us would, no doubt, like to say a few words on some of the burning questions, but I think that we should subject ourselves to a self-denying ordinance in this matter, as this will make Mr. Naoroji's task easier. Men of differing views are here this morning, but in our feelings towards him we are all united, and our sole object in coming together is to express to him our good-will and good wishes. I will, therefore, once again, on your behalf, wish God-speed to our dear old friend. May he have health and strength successfully to fulfil the noble mission he has undertaken.

DR. RUTHERFORD'S VISIT TO INDIA.

[*Sir William Wedderburn on Thursday, February* 13, 1908, *entertained a large party of Members of Parliament and others to welcome Dr. Rutherford, M. P., on his return from his visit to India in the capacity of Delegate from the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. In proposing the health of Dr. Rutherford, Sir W. Wedderburn said*:—]

Gentlemen, I thank you for the readiness with which you have responded to my invitation to meet Dr. Rutherford and welcome him on his return from India. As you know, he went as our delegate to the Indian National Congress, an emissary of sympathy and good-will. He went forth something like the dove out of the ark, and has winged his course over some troubled waters. Like the dove he has now returned, and I trust that we shall find in his mouth the olive leaf of conciliation and hope for the future. (*Hear, hear.*) With good humoured banter, Mr. Morley referred to the fact that our friend did not spend more than six weeks in the country. But I submit that first impressions are always the most vivid, and often the most correct, especially when we pass into a new environment and experience a striking change of atmosphere. If a man passes from the open air into a crowded and stuffy room, it does not take him long, certainly not six weeks, to realise that the air is mephitic. His first impression is quite correct. In fact a longer stay may dull his senses and make him less conscious of the tainted atmosphere. Similarly, I attach much value to Dr. Rutherford's

first impressions. A perfectly sincere and single-minded witness, he has passed from the free air of Great Britain to the less wholesome atmosphere of officialised and, I fear, police-ridden India, and I submit that the British public should give a careful hearing to his report regarding the present condition and temper of the Indian people. We should also bear in mind that Dr. Rutherford did not go out altogether as a novice; he had made India a special study for some years, and while out there he had exceptional opportunities for hearing both sides of the question, from Englishmen and Indians, official and non-official (*Hear, hear.*) What the House of Commons and the British public want to know are the broad facts of the case: What is the real condition of the masses in India? If there is suffering, and discontent, what is the true remedy? To the first question I would answer that the condition of the masses is one of extreme destitution: they live from hand to mouth, and have no reserve, so that the failure of one harvest causes them to die in millions, unless fed by the State. We must never forget that famine in India is not a famine of food, but of poverty. The Famine Commissioners reported that in the worst localities and in the worst weeks of the famine, there never was a lack of food. The people died in sight of abundance because they had not the coin or the credit to buy the pennyworth of grain that would have saved them from death by hunger. The official version is that the people are lightly taxed and increasing in prosperity. But if this is the case, why has the Indian administration again and again refused an economic enquiry which would determine the fact? After the last famine the Indian Famine Union asked the Secretary of State for an economic enquiry on the lines followed by Mr.

Charles Booth in London and Mr. Rowntree in York; but this was refused, though the demand was supported by a memorial from representatives of every important class in England, from the Archbishop of Canterbury downwards. Though the memorial was thus proscribed by an ex-Viceroy of India, Mr. Morley has now been approached by the Indian Famine Union, and it is hoped that he will grant the economic enquiry asked for. (*Hear, hear.*) Then as regards the remedy, we believe that this extreme destitution of the masses is quite unnecessary and preventible. (*Hear, hear.*) With a fine soil and climate, and with labour abundant and skilful, India should be a garden instead of a place of death and desolation; and the first step towards a better state of things is to give the people a reasonable voice in their own affairs. Mr. Morley has well put it that "you cannot transplant bodily the venerable oak of our Constitution to India, but you can transplant the spirit of our institution—the spirit, the temper, the maxims of British institutions. All these you can transplant and act upon and abide by." People talk a great deal of trash about the East being East, and the West being West. But human nature is human nature in the East as well as the West; and twice two make four in the tropics as much as at the poles. The burden of proof lies entirely on those who allege exceptional circumstances which unfit the people of India for free institutions. So far from being unfit, there are special conditions which render them peculiarly fit for self-government, their docility, their law-abiding nature, their conservative instincts, their experience of self-government in their ancient village communities. I shall be glad to hear Dr. Rutherford's impressions as to their attitude under the sufferings of famine and plague. (*Hear, hear.*) Gentlemen, I have been occupied

for many years trying, in a humble way, to obtain redress of Indian grievances. (*Cheers.*) I have experienced in that period many disappointments, and have received some hard knocks. But now at last I seem to see a little daylight. Many of our friends both here and in India have lost patience. They consider that Mr. Morley, having the power in his hands, is too cautious and too slow. But we must realise the enormous difficulties of his position, and it is common sense to believe that he is true to his lifelong principles of Liberalism. A big ironclad cannot be turned round at once; but the helm has been put about, and the ship is gradually changing its course. No doubt, the Simla proposals have been disappointing, but Mr. Morley has assured us that the ultimate decision, which is in his hands, will be in accordance with a policy of sympathetic and progressive reform. Also from his latest speech we learn that he is giving his attention to certain specific measures in the right direction. I refer to the proposed Parliamentary Enquiry by a Joint Committee of both Houses on Indian affairs; the appointment of an Indian to the Executive Council of the Viceroy; and the separation of the judicial and executive functions. These measures are calculated to give lively satisfaction in India. (*Cheers.*) I have now the pleasure of proposing health and prosperity to our guest, Dr. Rutherford. He is a young man and I hope he will live long to do useful work for the cause of India. (*Cheers*).

WELCOME TO MESSRS. KEIR HARDIE & NEVINSON.

[*A public meeting was held on April* 9, 1908, *in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, to welcome Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., and Mr. H. W. Nevinson on their return from India. The chair was taken by Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart., who was supported on his right and left by the guests of the occasion, and by Sir Henry Cotton, M. P. Sir W. Wedderburn, who was received with loud applause, said* :—]

We are met this afternoon to welcome two friends on their return from India: Mr. Keir Hardie—(*cheers*)—who represents the Labour Party; and Mr. Nevinson—(*cheers*)—who represents the power of a friendly and sympathetic Press. By their visit to India, and their impartial evidence as to facts, they have certainly conferred a great benefit both upon India and upon this country. (*Hear, hear.*) Mr. Keir Hardie has long interested himself in India. I remember that about fifteen years ago he contributed to our journal *India* an article entitled "The Democracy and India"; and in that article he most truly said that "it was lack of knowledge on the part of the people of this country which makes continued injustice to the people of India possible." Yes, ignorance is the enemy, not want of good-will on the part of the Democracy. (*Hear, hear.*) What we want is the truth about India, her economic condition, the feeling and wishes of the people, and the best remedies for their grievances. We want the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. (*Cheers.*) In the same article Mr. Keir Hardie refers to an interesting incident which occurred in the North of England about the middle of the last century, when the Chartists captured a meeting called by friends of India, and passed

a resolution declaring that, when the working men of England were fairly represented in Parliament, they would "make short work of injustice in India." In the Labour Party we see a good beginning of the fair representation of working men in Parliament; and the people of India regard the Labour members as their special friends. They, therefore, greatly rejoiced when Mr. Keir Hardie, till then the Leader of the Labour Party, came to India to see things with his own eyes; and, further, they greatly rejoice to know that he intends in future to devote himself specially to the cause of India. (*Cheers.*) They have also found a right good friend in Mr. Nevinson. (*Hear, hear.*) I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to the "Manchester Guardian" for its unwearied support of Indian interests. In the time of the great famine it sent out as its special correspondent Mr. Vaughan Nash, whom Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman afterwards selected as his Private Secretary. And now, in conjunction with other friendly journals, it has sent out Mr. Nevinson, a most experienced observer, to tell us the meaning of the "unrest" in India. What is the microbe which has produced these feverish symptoms? Is it the microbe of original sin in the Indian people—(*laughter*)—or is it the microbe of bastard Imperialism and foolish race prejudice? ("*Yes.*") I have just been reading a delightful article by Mr. Nevinson in the *Indian Review*, an excellent Madras magazine, in which he bids farewell to his friends in India. He has no personal grievances and tenders thanks to all for their kindness and courtesy, from Governors down to police officers. So catholic indeed, is his good-will that in his general thanks-giving he does not even exclude the spies who dogged his steps, a grotesque imitaon of Russian methods on the part of our British officials.

Of these spies he says, they "always displayed civility in carrying out their orders, and by their open-hearted stupidity never left me in a moment's doubt as to their nature and intentions." Mr. Nevinson takes with perfect good humour this mean spying on his movements, and the tampering with his letters. But the people of this country must feel ashamed that their servants in India can stoop to such methods. (*Hear, hear.*) At the same time, the high-minded toleration, by Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Nevinson, of these petty indignities, proves the even balance of their minds, and makes us all the more confident in the impartiality of their evidence. (*Hear, hear.*) So much for the personal element in introducing our guests of the evening. As regards future action on behalf of India, may I point out that a grave crisis is now approaching with regard to the constitutional reforms promised by Mr. Morely. These reforms relate especially to the proposed Council of Notables, the expansion of the Legislative Councils, and administrative decentralisation. The reports regarding these measures include a vast amount of conflicting arguments and evidence, involving most important issues. Mr. Morley has, I am glad to say, retained in his own hands the final decision; but I feel considerable anxiety as to the method that will be followed in arriving at this decision; and I trust that our Parliamentary friends will see their way to recommend to Mr. Morley the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee, to digest this mass of material and make recommendations as to the most desirable means of satisfying the legitimate aspirations of the Indian people. (*Hear, hear.*) It is now my honourable duty to ask Mr. Keir Hardie to address the meeting. (*Cheers*).

THE HINDU MAHOMEDAN CONFERENCE.

[*A well-attended meeting of Hindus and Mahomedans was held at Rája's Hotel, Allahabad, on January* 1, 1911. *Sir William Wedderburn in opening the proceedings made the following speech* :—]

Your Highness, Maharaj Bahadur, and Gentlemen,—I feel much honoured by your invitation to me to take the chair on this occasion. It is most generous of you thus to condone my rashness in intervening in so delicate a matter as the relations between the two great communities of India. My excuse is that I wish well to both the communities, and I feel acutely that the growing tension between them is a serious menace to the progress and prosperity of this country. With Hindus and Mahomedans working cordially together in the public interest a great and happy future for India is assured. Without it, all the efforts to achieve national progress must prove more or less unavailing. Gentlemen, I have no wish to underrate the difficulties in your path, but the very fact that so many Hindu and Mahomedan leaders have met together, animated by a common desire to help in finding a solution of those difficulties, is, to my mind, a matter of great significance and an augury of good for the future of this land. I think I may say that we are here to-day not necessarily to reach definite conclusions, if that be found impracticable, but (1) to have, in the first place, a free and frank interchange of views, made in a temperate and friendly spirit, on the more important questions that divide

the two communities; (2) to discover what common ground there is for joint action by the two communities, and to arrange, if possible, for such joint action; and (3) to ensure, where the Mahomedans and Hindus must differ, that the controversies and pursuit of different interests shall be conducted without unnecessary bitterness and with a reasonable regard for the legitimate interests of either party. I think these are important objects, and I am sure you will all agree that, whatever the result of this Conference, it was worth while to have assembled to consider how they could be promoted. Gentlemen, as I have already mentioned publicly, I had the advantage, before leaving England, of a consultation in this matter with such distinguished Indian leaders as H. H. the Aga Khan, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, and Mr. Ameer Ali, and since coming to this country I have taken every opportunity that could be found to ascertain the views of a number of other leading Hindu and Mahomedan gentlemen. Nothing has struck me more than the fact that the present estrangement—and I fear I must say growing estrangement between the two communities—is deeply deplored by leaders on both sides, who regret and condemn the general charges made by irresponsible persons against the character and motives of either community. There is also a fairly general recognition of the fact that it is the duty of leading men on both sides to work now for conciliation, as without such conciliation the peace and well-being of India are in serious danger.

CONCILIATION BOARDS.

Gentlemen, if you think that these statements are right, a temperate and friendly interchange of views on such questions as may be brought up for consideration at to-day's meeting should find us nearer to, and not farther

from, the object we all have at hearts. It is not for me to say what you should do at this Conference. But one suggestion I will venture to make and it is this. Even if you are not able to arrive at a definite conclusion on any questions coming up before you to-day, I think you might agree to appoint a small Committee of influential men from both sides and refer to it such matters as appear capable of adjustment, in friendly consultation of matters like the creation of Conciliation Boards. I respectfully hope that this suggestion will commend itself to both sides. I cannot close my remarks without expressing my sense to H. H. the Aga Khan's great courtesy in abridging the proceedings at Nagpur and bringing to Allahabad for this Conference so many leading Mahomedan gentlemen.

As no one on the Hindu side could undertake to issue corresponding invitations, I ventured to write and ask a few Hindu leaders to be present and I am grateful to them for their kind response.

PART IV.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PRESS.

EDMUND BURKE AND THE INDIAN BUREAUCRACY.

It is now exactly 100 years since the English Parliament made its most notable attempt to put a bit and a bridle in the mouth of the great Indian bureaucracy. In 1784 Mr. Fox's Bill "for the better government of India" was passed through the House of Commons by a majority of more than two to one in every division. And if it had become law a strong and independent Parliamentary control would have been established over the Executive in India. But the fall of the Coalition Ministry stopped the progress of the reformers; and, from a variety of political causes, the task has remained uncompleted to the present day. Now again the question is coming to the front. In the current number of the *Contemporary Review* the senior member for Manchester condemns the existing system of control exercised through the India Office as illusory and mischievous. He points out that in 1858, when the Crown took over India from the Company, the intention of Parliament was to create a constitutional check upon the power of the Indian bureaucracy, but that object was evidently not attained when the Indian Council was formed of fifteen leading members of the very bureaucracy which had to be checked. Mr. Slagg has, therefore, given notice in Parliament that he will call attention to the position and duties of the Council of India, and will move a resolution. There are also signs that the public, both general

and commercial, are not satisfied with the constitution of the India Council, which is practically the Court which decides all appeals preferred to England. The complaint is that the successful Indian official, after determining the policy in India, migrates to Westminster, and there sits in appeal on his own decisions. Such an arrangement is not according to ordinary ideas of business. It is in fact a historical "survival." And as there is reason to hope that Parliament will, at no distant date, address itself to this great question—which underlies all other questions of Indian reform—and will overhaul the existing machinery for the transaction of Indian business in England, the time seems opportune for a historical retrospect, in order that we may refresh our memories regarding past events and recall to mind the principles laid down in those great Indian debates of the last century, in which Fox and Pitt, Burke, Sheridan, and Erskine took a leading part. They were giants in those days; and probably there never was a period in English history, before or since, in which a more general and sustained attention was given to Indian affairs. But specially important is it to keep in popular remembrance the words of Edmund Burke, whose fervour and eloquence laid the foundations of the nobler policy of England towards India—a policy regarding which there have been temporary backslidings, but never with the consent and approval of the English people; a just and generous policy, which, in our own day, has received fresh vindication at the hands of Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright.

With a view to this retrospect, let us first give a glance at the circumstances under which Mr. Fox's Bill was introduced. I will afterwards briefly summarise the arguments of Mr. Burke, showing (1) the natural and

necessary evil of a foreign official rule ; (2) the entire and essential unfitness of the Court of Directors to control their servants in India ; and (3) the remedy to be applied.

Originally an association of merchant adventurers, trading under the protection of Charters granted by the British Crown, the East India Company had acquired dominion over a territory greater in extent and more thickly populated than all the possessions of the British Crown put together. From being traders they had become despotic rulers ; and grievous complaints had come to England as to the mode in which this rule had been exercised by their servants in India. On account of these complaints two Parliamentary Committees, the one secret, the other open, were appointed in 1781 to investigate the whole condition of British India, as well as the affairs of the Company, which were then in a bankrupt condition. These Committees made elaborate reports, all condemnatory of the Company's government, and disclosing transactions of great cruelty and oppression on the part of the high officials in India ; and upon these reports the House of Commons passed resolutions for the immediate dismissal of the Governor-General and the Chief Justice of Bengal. The secret influence of the Court of Directors was very great, and they fought hard to preserve their patronage and power, and to screen their servants in India. But the facts proved were too serious to be put aside ; and accordingly the Company was placed upon its trial. Thus in 1783 the situation was as follows (*vide* " History of England under George III. " by the Right Honourable W. Massey) :

The Company lay under accusation of having cruelly and scandalously abused the privileges of rulers. Their principal servants had been inculpated of gross malversation by a unanimous resolution of the House of Commons ; and the Company had nevertheless upheld their officers in spite of the opinion of Parlia-

ment and of the Ministers of the Crown. The administration of justice had been so notoriously and scandalously abused, that the Chief had been dismissed, in spite of the Company, by the authority of the King's Government. Nor had the Company purchased material prosperity by the open violation of the principles on which civil government, nay, society itself, is based. Plunder and extortion had only relieved their immediate and temporary exigencies. The ordinary resources of India were unequal to satisfy the greedy adventurers who were spread over the land, and to maintain the military force which was necessary to support an arbitrary and iniquitous Government. The Company, therefore, came before Parliament as delinquents who had grossly abused their trust, and as bankrupts unable to perform their engagements.

Such being the condition of affairs, India formed the most prominent topic in the King's speech on opening the autumnal Session of 1783: and a few days later Mr. Fox introduced his Bill to suspend the powers of the Company, and to bring the affairs of India under constitutional control. His plan was to erect a great department of State which should be charged with the direction of the whole administration of India; all the political authority of the Company being transferred to seven Commissioners nominated in the first instance in the Act of Parliament, and afterwards to be appointed by the Crown. It was in support of this Bill, of which he was the reputed author, that Mr. Burke made his memorable speech on December 1, 1783. As a leading member of the Parliamentary Committees which had during two years investigated Indian affairs, he was able to speak with knowledge and authority; and he declared that all political power must be taken from the Company. No remedy of less stringency would avail, because the abuses of that power were "habitual, not accidental," and because they were "utterly incurable in the body as it then stood constituted." The two great facts with which Parliament had to deal were the oppressions of the Company's servants in India, and the

entire failure of the Court of Directors in England to check these iniquities. So far from controlling the officials in India, the Directors were on terms of intimate alliance with the offenders, supporting them during their career in India, and afterwards screening them from punishment when they retired to England to enjoy their ill-gotten gains. And the reason of this was not far to seek. For the East India Company being a joint-stock concern, it was open to any one to purchase a share in its management. Under the constitution of the Company the Directors were elected by the proprietors of Indian stock; so that by purchasing this stock the Indian officials and their friends were able to obtain a preponderating influence both in the Court of Proprietors and in the Court of Directors. Nominally the servants of the Company, they thus became its masters. It is easy to see how this arrangement suited the wrong-doers. By plunder and oppression they realised colossal fortunes in India, and invested a portion of this wealth in the purchase of India stock; thus securing the election of their own partisans as Directors of the Company. What chance of redress was there from a court so constituted? Justice was thus made a mockery. For when complaints of oppression reached England the hearing was before men who were the nominees and representatives of the delinquents. The object of the Bill was to strike at the very root of these evils by ousting these unjust judges and by establishing a real and independent control in England over the Indian Executive. The control was to be a Parliamentary one, and it was to be exercised in a spirit of judicial impartiality.

From this outline of the surrounding circumstances we may now return to Mr. Burke's speech with reference to the three points above noted; and I will quote his

words with reference to (1) *the natural and necessary evils of a foreign official rule.* In Mr. Burke's opinion the rule of a migratory foreign bureaucracy is worse than almost any form of indigenous government. Compared with the ferocious irruptions into India of the Arabs, Tartars, and Persians, our conquest no doubt involved little bloodshed. But the difference in favour of the first conquerors was this: the Asiatic conquerors very soon abated of their ferocity, because they made the conquered country their own. They rose or fell with the rise or fall of the territory they lived in. Fathers there deposited the hopes of their posterity, and children there beheld the monuments of their fathers. With many disorders, and with few political checks upon power, nature had still fair play; the sources of acquisition were not dried up; and therefore the trade, the manufactures, and the commerce of the country flourished. "But under the English Government all this order is reversed. The Tartar invasion was mischievous; but it is our protection which destroys India. It was their enmity, but it is our friendship. Our conquest there, after 20 years, is as crude as it was the first day. The Natives scarcely know what it is to see the grey head of an Englishman. Young men (boys almost) govern there, without society and without sympathy with the Natives. They have no more social habits with the people than if they still resided in England, nor, indeed, any species of intercourse but that which is necessary to making a sudden fortune, with a view to a remote settlement." It was the system he blamed, not the individuals:

There is nothing in the boys we send to India worse than in the boys whom we are whipping at school, or that we see trailing a pike or bending over a desk at home. But as English youths in India drink the intoxicating draught of authority and dominion before their heads are able to bear it, and as they are full grown in fortune long before they are ripe in principle, neither nature no

reason has opportunity to exert themselves for remedy of the excesses of their premature power.

The doings of such crude administrators necessarily proved revolutionary, and destructive to the ancient institutions of the country:

I confess to you when first I came to know this business in its true nature and extent, my surprise did a little suspend my indignation. I was in a manner stupefied by the desperate boldness of a few obscure young men who tossed about, subverted, and tore to pieces, as if it were in the gambols of a boyish unluckiness and malice, the most established rights, and the most ancient and the most revered institutions of ages and nations.

Such are some of the unavoidable evils of a foreign, bureaucracy, in no way responsible to the people over whom they rule. But besides these, special evils creep in where there is no strong and independent control. For a close service like that in India tends to form itself into cliques, which look more to personal advantage than to the public good. And such cliques cannot be checked except by a very strong and independent authority in England, by the punishment of greedy and unscrupulous ambition, and by assured protection to those who bring abuses to light. If there be no day of reckoning for official misdeeds committed in India, the service generally tends to become demoralised:

Men will not look to Acts of Parliament, to regulations, to declarations, to votes, to resolutions. No, they are not such fools. They will ask, What is the road to power, credit, wealth, and honours? They will ask, What conduct ends in neglect, disgrace, poverty, exile? These will teach them the course which they are to follow. It is your distribution of these that will give the character and tone to your Government. All the rest is miserable grimace.

(2) *The entire and essential unfitness of the Court of Directors to control their servants in India.* I have already referred to the altered position of the Directors, who nominally the masters, were the mere creatures of the ndian officials who had bought up the Company's shares:

The stock is bought up in qualifications. The vote is not to protect the stock, but the stock is bought to acquire the vote; and the end of the vote is to cover and support, against justice, some man of power who has made an obnoxious fortune in India, or to maintain in power those who are actually employing it in the acquisition of such a fortune, and to avail themselves in return of his patronage, that he may shower the spoils of the East, 'barbaric pearl and gold,' on them, their families, and dependents. So that all the relations of the Company are not only changed, but inverted. The servants in India are not appointed by the Directors but the Directors are chosen by them. The seat of the supreme power is in Calcutta. The house in Leadenhall Street is nothing more than a change for their agents, factors, and deputies to meet in, to take care of their affairs and support their interests; and this so avowedly that we see the known agents of the delinquent servants marshalling and disciplining their forces, and the prime spokesmen in all their assemblies.

So far all parties in Parliament were agreed. No one denied the excesses of the officials in India, and no one denied the inefficacy of the controlling authorities in England. But as regards (3) *the remedy to be applied*, a wide difference arose between those who, like Mr. Burke, proposed to remove the authors of the evil, and those who proposed to continue the existing system under certain restrictions. On behalf of the opposition Mr. Dundas proposed that the management of Indian affairs should continue in the hands of the Company under "a more active control on the part of the Crown." Regarding the principle of this proposal Mr. Burke spoke as follows:

It is to recommit the Government of India to the Court of Directors. Those who would commit the reformation of India to the destroyers of it are the enemies to that reformation. A Right Hon. gentleman says he would keep the present government of India in the Court of Directors, and would, to curb them, provide salutary regulations. Wonderful! That is, he would appoint the offenders to correct the old offences, and he would render the vicious and the foolish wise and virtuous by salutary regulations. He would appoint the wolf as guardian of the sheep; but he has invented a curious muzzle, by which this protecting wolf shall not be able to open his jaws above an inch or two at the utmost. Thus his work is finished. But I tell the Right Hon. gentleman that controlled depravity is not innocence, and that it is not the

labour of delinquency in chains that will correct abuses. If the undone people of India see their old oppressors in confirmed power, they will expect nothing but what they will certainly feel, a continuance, or rather an aggravation, of all their former sufferings. They look to the seat of power, and to the persons who fill it; and they despise these gentlemen's regulations as much as the gentlemen do who talk of them.

Nor did Mr. Burke hope much from the proposed control to be exercised through the Ministers of the Crown; for under a system of party government he feard the effect of playing so vast a patronage as that of India in the hands of Ministers. "I am sure," he says, "that the influence of the Crown will by no means aid a reformation of this kind, which can niether be originated nor supported, but, by the uncorrupt public virtue of the representatives of the people of England. Let it once get into the ordinary course of administration, and to me all hopes of reformation are gone."

The plan of Mr. Fox's Bill for controlling the Indian bureaucracy was a very different one. The power of control was to be taken from those who were the friends and nominees of the delinquents, and was to be placed in the hands of a strong and independent Commission appointed by Parliament from among the most trusted public men in England: men unconnected with Indian intrigues, and prepared to enforce publicly and with judicial impartiality the broad principles of justice and good government. The design and main scope of the Bill was

to regulate the administration of India upon the principles of a Court of Judicature, and to exclude, as far as human prudence can exclude, all possibility of a currupt partiality, in appointing to office, or supporting in office, or covering from enquiry and punishment, any person who has abused or shall abuse his authority. At the board, as appointed and regulated by this Bill, reward and punishment cannot be shifted and reversed by a whisper. That Commission becomes fatal to cabal, to intrigue, and to secret representation, those instruments of the ruin of India.

The Bill

> calls in persons in nowise concerned with any act censured by Parliament; persons generated with, and for, the reform, of which they are themselves the most essential part. To these the chief regulations in the Bill are helps, not fetters, for they are authorities to support, not regulations to restrain them. The tenure is for four years, or during their good behaviour. That good behaviour is as long as they are true to the principles of the Bill; and the judgment is in either House of Parliment. This is the tenure of your judges; and a valuable principle of the Bill is to make a judicial administration for India.

By these principles Mr. Fox's Bill was designed to provide for Indian affairs "an administration at once protecting and stable." Unhappily for India, and for England, this great scheme of reform, this "Magna Charta of Hindustan," fell to the ground with the fall of the Ministry which originated it. And shortly afterwards Mr. Pitt passed his India Bill, which was in effect the plan proposed by Mr. Dundas, and so strongly denounced by Mr. Burke: the administration was still to be conducted in the name of the Company; the Court of Directors retaining all their patronage, while the Crown dictated the policy through the Board of Control. This cumbrous double Government, which continued most of the vices of the old system, was not designed for a permanent institution. But the force of political cirumstances little connected with Indian interests, prolonged its existence until the Mutinies of 1857, when the Crown assumed the direct administration. And even then the change was one of nomenclature rather than of principle. For the independent Parliamentary control which formed the central feature of Mr. Burke's scheme was not revived. The transfer was effected in a hasty manner during a great crisis, and the arrangements were of a temporary and make-shift kind. Indeed, as regards the interests represented, the new Indian Council was little more than

the old Court of Directors under a new name. This will be apparent when we remember that Mr. Burke's chief practical objection to Directors was that they were the representatives of the Indian bureaucracy which it was their duty to control. And exactly the same objection may be taken to the Indian Council, which is regularly recruited from the leading members of the Indian official class. In fact it may be said that the last state of the control is worse than the first. For, whereas the Court of Directors was filled with the nominees of the dominant Indian officials, the Indian Council is filled with these officials themselves.

I propose at another time to make some suggestions as to the best method of applying the principles laid down by Mr. Burke to the present situation. The elimination of official predominance; an infusion of wholesome Parliamentary influences; publicity in the proceedings; and a procedure analogous to that of a Court of Justice: these are conditions of an effectual control as necessary and as opportune to-day as they were 100 years ago. But in addition to these the progress of time and events, and of enlightenment, has rendered one more condition indispensable; and that is, the reasonable representation of Native interests and opinion. How this can best be effected is a question requiring much consideration. In March, 1858, in his original scheme for an Indian Council, Mr. Disraeli, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed that four seats at the Council Board in London should be reserved for members elected by a "special Indian constituency." And in any measure of reform it will be necessary to consider how a true Indian constituency can best be formed and by what process of election the best representation can be obtained, and the

best protection secured for Indian interests and Indian feelings. This matter must be dealt with in a spirit of broad and far-sighted statesmanship. As observed by Lord Palmerston, the whole question is far too serious a one to be made the shuttlecock of political parties. And on this point we may conclude with the words of Mr. Burke: "For my part, sir, I put all indirect considerations wholly out of mind. My sole question, on each clause of the Bill, amounts to this:—Is the measure proposed required by the necessities of India?"—*Bombay Gazette*, 5th March, 1884.

FORWARD FRONTIER POLICY.

As Dr. Robertson has been rescued, and Umra Khan a fugitive, we are now at liberty to ask the Government, what is to be the next scene in the trans-frontier drama? Had the relief party been too late, or had any serious disaster overtaken our troops among the defiles, we should, doubtless, have been launched upon an indefinite career of mountain warfare. But fortune has been very kind to Her Majesty's Ministers, so that they have not only passed safely through a most perilous crisis, but, in the strong position they now occupy, they have the opportunity of reconsidering the whole situation. And I earnestly trust that they will see their way to end these frontier aggressions, and return to the sound policy of Lord Lawrence, which was based upon respect for the rights of others, and which secured to use friendly neighbours on the frontier, a full treasury, and a contented people throughout India. The present expedition has indeed been an object lesson which must have made

clear, even to the least observant and to the most prejudiced, the futility, the danger and the costliness of this marvellous policy of adventure, which has landed us in the present complications; which thinks to strengthen our position on the frontier by locating British officers at isolated points in this mountainous wilderness, where they are at the mercy of wild tribes, and far away from all support; with the result that we have to send a whole army corps two hundred miles in order to save their lives, and extricate them from the trap in which they are caught. Surely no scheme could be devised better calculated to lower our reputation, dissipate our resources, and produce chaos along our frontiers.

Now that the British officers are safe, Government has a free hand; and the action as regards the particular case of Chitral is mainly important as disclosing the principles upon which trans-frontier affairs will be conducted in the future. It will be remembered that the first object of the expedition, as stated by the Viceroy, was to rescue Dr. Robertson. But in the Proclamation addressed to the Border Tribes prior to the commencement of the operations, the Viceroy set forth a further object, and gave a definite promise. He said:

> The sole object of the Government of India is to put an end to the present and prevent any future unlawful aggression on Chitral territory, and as soon as this object has been attained the force will be withdrawn. The Government of India have no intention of permanently occupying any territories through which Umra Khan's misconduct may now force them to pass, or of interference with the independence of the tribes.

Now it appears that the flight of both Umra Khan and Sher Afzul has put an end to any present unlawful aggression on Chitral territory. But what is the nature of the measures by which such aggression is to be prevented in the future? This is a question of the utmost importance, for the nature of the measures will indicate the

future course of action, whether in accordance with the wise policy of Lord Lawrence, or in continuation of the recent policy of adventure and aggression which has brought us into these political and financial straits. The question is one demanding the most earnest consideration of Her Majesty's Government. For how can future unlawful aggression on Chitral territory be effectually prevented except by occupying Chitral in force? And how can Chitral be occupied in force without keeping permanently open a road for wheeled traffic to Peshawur, a distance of 180 miles? So formidable an undertaking would inevitably lead to wholesale annexations and a vast expenditure.

It is the besetting sin of Liberal Governments when in office to shirk the duty of reversing a mischievous policy, and of enforcing in foreign and Indian affairs the good principles they professed when in opposition. With the strong forces of official opinion to struggle against, a Liberal Minister finds it so much easier and more pleasant to accept the doctrine of continuity in administration. This suits our opponents exactly, especially when the policy is a risky one. It is then a case of "heads I win, tails you lose." If the venture ends successfully our opponents justly claim the credit of it, and make the success a ground for further encroachments. If, on the other hand, there is disaster they have the satisfaction of denouncing the incapacity of a Liberal Administration, and showing that it failed because it did not go far enough. In this trans-frontier question there is, at the present crisis, a choice of Hercules, a separation of two ways; and I trust that Ministers will not hesitate boldly to choose the better path. What then are the two courses which can be pursued? Briefly stated, the policy of Lord Lawrence and the school of practical statesmen associated with his name was to keep

within the natural boundaries of India. Nature has kindly provided India to the North West with a mountain rampart, and has moreover manned that rampart with volunteer defenders, the wild and warlike tribes who alone can exist in these inhospitable regions; whose one valued possession is their independence: and who are prepared to defend that possession with their lives. What the nature of that mountain barrier is, how great the distances, how high the snowy process, how deep and rapid the torrents, how rocky and inaccessible the defiles, and how brave its defenders, has been made very familiar to us during the last month by the daily telegrams from the seat of war. The policy of Lord Lawrence was to maintain that barrier, and to leave its brave defenders in the enjoyment of their cherished independence. This is a policy which commends itself to commonsense. When a farmer has a thick and thorny hedge round his orchard, he naturally preserves that hedge and regards the thorns and briars as his best defence against the thieves who would steal his fruit. To spend his substance in removing the thorns and making great gaps in the fence would surely be the height of folly. If there happen to be hornets' nests in the recesses of this hedge why should he go and get himself stung? Had he not better leave the hornets where they are in order that they may sting the thieves? The advisers who will not allow him to let well alone are his worst enemies. Similarly in India, any departure from the safe, wise, and humane policy of Lord Lawrence can bring nothing but ruin both political and financial. How does it profit us to shoot down the tribesmen who keep watch and ward in the fastnesses, a hundred miles beyond our frontier? And can anything be more imbecile than to make invasion easy by spending vast sums in constructing roads through

these wilds, thus paving the way for an invader? What does past experience teach us? It teaches us that nothing but good has ever come from Lord Lawrence's policy. All our frontier disasters, from the first Afghan war downwards, have been directly caused by some departure from those principles. On each occasion, when disaster has befallen us, we have for a time recognised the folly of the enterprises which have involved us in bloodshed and disgrace. But on each occasion the lesson has soon been forgotten. The restless professional instincts of a great army maintained in a high state of efficiency, and pining for distinction, keep official public opinion in India always in favour of an advance, and the military bureaucracy at Simla has always proved too strong for any control exercised from Home. They can always bide their time till they find a Viceroy or a Secretary of State pliant to their will, or till a Russian scare allows them to carry out the schemes they are perpetually hatching. Thus it happens that our best Viceroys, like Lord Mayo, Lord Northbrook, and Lord Ripon, can do little more than put off the evil day until successors are found unwilling or unable to control the adventurous spirits by whom they are surrounded. I do not wish to be misunderstood in this matter. I cast no reflection upon our Indian military officers, among whom I have many of my best friends. On the contrary I fully recognise the fact that our army would not be fit for its duties if the men were not eager for active service and opportunities for distinction. If I keep a watch-dog to defend my house it is no dispraise of him to say that his jaws are strong and his teeth sharp, and that he is willing enough to use them. At the same time it is my duty to keep him on the chain, and to see that he only bites the right persons. He cannot be trusted to make the selection

for himself. And so it is in the case of John Bull and his dogs of war. He alone is responsible for letting them loose. He must see that they do not put their teeth into the wrong persons, and it will be no sufficient excuse to say that all military opinion was in favour of the attack. As I will show presently, even military opinion is by no means unanimous in favour of these disastrous innovations. These new-fangled enterprises, of which Chitral is a good example, are called a "forward" policy. I say they are a backward policy as regards the safety of our Indian Empire, because they destroy our natural defences, dissipate our resources, and alienate our friends.

Let us consider very briefly the arguments put forward by Lord Roberts, who is by far the most important and responsible public man who favours the aggressive policy. In the *Times* of 13th April he sets forth his case. He calls Lord Lawrence's methods obsolete, and commends the policy "adopted of late years." Let us see how he proves the necessity of the change, and how he justifies his bold assertion that, had Lord Lawrence been alive, he would have approved the altered policy. He first gives a description of the border tribes, as being practically independent, and inhabiting the mountainous region with which our frontier is co-terminous from Quetta to a point 100 miles north of Gilghit, some 600 miles as the crow flies. These tribes, he tells us, can muster a quarter of a million of fighting men, armed with guns and rifles, many of them of modern patterns, and he describes them as extremely fanatical, but hardy and brave, and excellent soldiers when disciplined. He further declares that upon the attitude of these tribes the successful defence of India will, in great measure, depend; that they must be dealt with as a weapon of the utmost value to that side which

can secure their co-operation ; and that we should strengthen our cordial relations with them in order to "ensure their helping us to make the necessary preparations for maintaining their own independence." All this is excellent, but it suggests no departure from Lord Lawrence's policy. On the contrary, the whole argument tells against these aggressive frontier schemes. If we base our hopes of friendly co-operation upon the determination of these tribes to preserve their independence, we surely should not begin operations by ourselves depriving them of that independence, and shooting them down if they prefer to remain free. Lord Roberts asks whether it is wise to leave these tribes to intrigue against us, and to present such valuable fighting materials to our opponents ? To this I would reply that the spectacle of the Baluch tribes, the Waziris, the Hunza-Nagars absorbed by us is the strongest incentive we could give to the remaining border tribes to intrigue with our enemies in order to maintain the independence which their neighbours have lost. The only real way of conciliating the good-will of these wild tribes is to convince them that we do not want their wretched country, and would not take it as a gift ; and this is inconsistent with a policy of aggression. Certainly we do not wish to present these fighting materials to our opponents but the most certain way of doing this is to threaten their independence. As Dr. Leitner has well said in a letter to the *Morning Post*, "the first invader is the enemy, the second is the deliverer."

This is the whole of the case, as stated by Lord Roberts. But let it not be supposed that even military opinion is unanimous. Curiously enough in the very same issue of the *Times* there appear, alongside of Lord Robert's communication, letters from two other general officers of

large experience, Sir Neville Chamberlain and Lord Chelmsford, who are entirely opposed to Lord Roberts' aggressive schemes. Sir N. Chamberlain, who commanded in the Ambeyla Campaign and spent many years in Afghanistan and on the frontier, regards our Chitral difficulties as the "inevitable outcome of the system introduced within the last few years," a system which has "brought about the unprovoked invasion of the territory of independent neighbouring tribes with whom we have no quarrel and with whom we have in late years lived on fairly friendly terms." This reads unpleasantly in connection with the telegrams we have been in the habit of reading from day to day, which recount how we "demolished a village or two," as part of a morning's work; how "the fire of the artillery and maxim-guns was very destructive;" how "the mountain guns speedily got the range and shell after shell burst among the natives;" and how "the enemy were compelled to give way before the furious fire that was poured into them, and suffered very heavily." Surely some sympathy must be felt for these brave men with whom "we have no quarrel," and whose only offence is that of defending their territory and homes from a foreign invader. In any case it will be admitted that such proceedings are a strange way of "strengthening our cordial relations" with these tribes, upon whose attitude, Lord Roberts tells us, "the successful defence of India will in great measure depend."

India, May 1895.

THE RETENTION OF CHITRAL.

Twenty years ago, when we first came into political relations with Chitral, a tough old Chief, Aman-ul-Mulk, was the ruler of that territory. He probably did not possess all the cardinal virtues; but he possessed those particular qualifications which we most required in a frontier neighbour; he was strong enough to keep order; he was fairly popular with the local tribes; and he was well disposed towards the British Government. Indeed his friendly disposition towards us was of a pronounced and practical kind. For in 1876 he voluntarily tendered his allegiance to our feudatory the Maharaja of Kashmir, and afterwards proposed still closer relations with the Indian Government. He was in fact prepared heartily to throw in his lot with us. What condition of frontier affairs could be better than this? And what was the secret of this fierce old barbarian's attachment to our rule? The reason was a simple one. His ruling passion was, and the ruling passion of all these tribes is, love of independence; and that independence was threatened from the side of Afghanistan. Hence his affection for us. The motive was self-preservation, a motive which governs human nature all the world over. I remember long ago a rebellious little mite being put into the corner until she should promise amendment. To the surprise of all she immediately reported, "Alice is good." But the mystery was cleared up when hastily retreating from the corner, she added *sotto voce* "Alice is very much afraid of that big spider!" In the present case the Amir of Kabul was the

big spider, whose threatening attitude produced such good inclinations among the frontier tribes. Aman-ul-Mulk thought we might help him to maintain his independence, and that we did not covet his territory. Hence he drew towards us, and became our willing ally. To use the words of the Government of India in their despatch of the 8th of May last, "fear of Afghan aggression threw Mehtar Aman-ul-Mulk into the arms of Kashmir, and thus led to British suzerainty."

This Aman-ul-mulk was not one of those helpless puppets set up by ourselves, who get their throats cut the moment we are in difficulties. Of such puppets, to our sorrow, we have had large experiences, from Shah Shujah in the first Afghan War down to Nizam-ul-Mulk in the present complications. No; Aman-ul-Mulk was a ruler able and willing to bring help to his friends in time of need. And this he did effectually for us, a short time afterwards, when we got ourselves into trouble with the tribes at Gilghit. In the Gilghit direction we had followed the "forward" policy, which means encroachment upon the tribes. Instead of, as at Chitral, supporting the tribes against outside aggression, we had ourselves become the trespassers upon their independence: and in pursuance of this policy had established a frontier post at Gilghit, an isolated position far away among the most inaccessible ranges of the Hindu Kush, some 250 miles from Chitral, and more than that distance from the British frontier. Here, unmindful of the tragic fate of Sir Alexander Burnes, and of Sir Louis Cavagnari, we had located Major Biddulph, as our agent, with a small escort of native troops. Thus isolated he was at the mercy of the wild frontier tribes, being cut off by the snows, even from Kashmir, during six months of the year. From this precious coign

of vantage Major Biddulph was supposed to keep watch and ward over the safety of the Empire; but in point of fact he was not in a position to secure even his own safety. Being viewed with jealousy and distrust by the tribes whose independence he was invading, he was without sources of information, and quite in the dark as to what was going on around him. The result was that just as winter was setting in, and the passes were closed, a bolt fell upon him out of the blue. Quite unexpectedly the tribes were raised against him by the Chief of Yasin, a supposed friend and ally, and but for the intervention of Aman-ul-Mulk, he would, undoubtedly, have been destroyed before help could reach him. The following is the guarded official account of our narrow escape on this occasion (*vide* Government of India Despatch of 22nd December, 1880, printed at page 4 of the Chitral Blue Book): "On the 29th October, a force of 750 men, led by Pehlwan Bahadur, the Chief of Yasin, surprised the frontier fort of Gakuch, and marched upon Gilghit. The Kashmir fort at Sher was invested and attacked, and Major Biddulph was informed that more than one of the neighbouring Chiefs only awaited its fall to join the insurgents. He advanced to its relief with his own escort of 20 native infantry and some Kashmir troops, but the attempt failed, and for a time there was a prospect of his being himself beseiged. On the 19th November, however, we received news that Pehlwan Bahadur had broken up the investment of Sher and withdrawn; and it appears from later intelligence that, attacked or threatened in the rear by the Chitral Chief, he had been abandoned by his men, and had fled almost alone towards Wakhan. The rising has, therefore, for the present completely collapsed, and there is reason to hope that no further disturbances may take place. The

causes and objects of the rising are still obscure." Of course, they were obscure, as regards particulars. For all purposes of local information poor Major Biddulph was up in a balloon. But as regards the general cause and object of the rising there could be no doubt. The cause was hatred of intruders, and the object was to get rid of them. Political officers may say what they like, but that is the root of the whole matter. And this truth was shortly afterwards admitted by the Government of India which, having temporarily returned to sanity under the guidance of Lord Ripon and Lord Hartington, withdrew the irritating presence of the Gilghit outpost. Then there was peace on the frontier. When the thorn in the flesh was removed the inflammation disappeared.

This Yasin incident, with the opportune arrival of Aman-ul-Mulk as a *Deus ex machina*, illustrates vividly the wisdom of Lord Lawrence's policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of frontier States, whether large or small. For the most important act of internal self-government in these tribal States is the choice of their ruler, and Lord Lawrence's policy was to leave this matter to the people themselves. When, by the rough and ready method customary in such primitive communities, the survival of the fittest has been secured, then is the time for the Government of India to recognise him as the *de facto* ruler, not for his personal merits, nor on account of any supposed partiality for ourselves, but because he represents the people of the State, and because he has shown himself capable of maintaining order among them. According to this policy our one abiding interest in our relations with these frontier States is that the ruler should be a strong and responsible man; strong in his personal character, and trong in his influence over the tribes. And whatever his

original feeling may have been, we may reckon with confidence on his drawing towards us and becoming, like Aman-ul-Mulk, an effective supporter, if we can only convince him that we have no designs against his independence. Dost Muhammad, a really strong ruler, was an instance in point. Though we treated him as an enemy in the first Afghan War, and drove him from Kabul, in order to set up our puppet Shah Shujah, he, nevertheless, became our staunch ally when, having regained his throne, he became satisfied that we had given up our insane idea of occupying Afghanistan.

What Dost Muhammad was on a large scale, Aman-ul-Mulk was on a small one. And if our Indian Government had been wise they would, on his death, have allowed the process of natural selection to provide Chitral with a successor of similar qualifications. While the delicate operation of selecting the fittest is going on, outside interference is purely mischievous. Our political officers, being as a rule in the hands of intriguing subordinates, are generally ignorant of the real character and disposition of the various claimants, and their attempts at king-making would seem farcical if the results were not so disastrous and humiliating. What were the events which followed on the death of Aman-ul-Mulk in August 1892? First, one of his sons named Afzul-ul-Mulk violently seized upon the reins of government, setting aside his eldest brother, Nizam-ul-Mulk, who was his fathers's acknowledged heir. This Afzul-ul-Mulk next proceeded to put to death three of his remaining brothers, and then wrote to the Viceroy announcing his succession, which he described as having taken place "with the unanimous consent" of his brothers. This was grim irony, worthy of Philip of Spain. But it will hardly be credited that the Viceroy, Lord

Lansdowne, being aware of the above facts, at once wrote in reply to this blood-stained usurper, and actually congratulated him on his accession with the consent of his brothers (*vide* Blue Book, p. 18). This uncouth attempt to worship the rising sun proved abortive. For a month had hardly elapsed before the one strong man in the Chitral imbroglio appeared on the scene. This was Sher Afzul, brother of Aman-ul-Mulk, who had for sometime been a refugee in Afghanistan. As usual the political officers were quite taken by surprise. They were just contemplating a British mission to Chitral, "in order to consolidate our relations" with the usurper, when Sher Afzul entered Chitral territory with a small party of horsemen. He was joined by large numbers of adherents, and immediately marched upon Chitral fort, which he took, killing Afzul-ul-Mulk. As he was a capable and popular man the people at once submitted to him, and there seemed some prospect of a settled government in Chitral. But these arrangements did not commend themselves to Colonel Durand, the British agent at Gilghit, who, without the sanction of Government, proceeded to take part in an expedition against Sher Afzul, despatching a force of 250 rifles and two guns, besides local levies, in support of Nizam-ul-Mulk, another claimant for the throne. Not being strong enough to resist this combination, Sher Afzul again took refuge in Afghanistan, to bide his time there; and Nizam-ul-Mulk reigned in his stead. These were strange proceedings, involving the unauthorised dethronement of a *de facto* ruler, whose authority had been accepted by the people, and with whom we had no quarrel. Stranger still, these proceedings of Colonel Durand received the "full approval" of the Viceroy. Having thus set up a puppet king a British agent with troops had to be moved up to Chitral

in order to keep him on his legs. Did this revolutionary violence produce order and security? Not at all. Dr. Robertson the British agent reported, "We seem to be on a volcano here....the atmosphere of Chitral is one of conspiracy and intrigue." Later on he stated that "the country was in a distracted condition, torn by factions; the Mehtar was highly unpopular; the English were looked upon with suspicion and dislike by the influential classes." And this is how he describes the unhappy puppet king: "An unnerved, terror-stricken Chief, who was conscious that he ruled on the merest sufferance a thoroughly disaffected people, whose abstention from further outbreaks of violence was entirely due to a doubt and fear lest the Government of India might have the will and also the power to avenge any injury to its nominee." Such was the outcome of our blundering interference. We had, however, to descend to lower depths of discredit and humiliation. Our poor puppet Nizam-ul-Mulk was murdered by his brother, Amir-ul-Mulk, who then proclaimed himself Mehtar. Where was our control then? Our local agent Lieut. Gurdon, far from controlling events, found himself in a very precarious position, and was compelled to receive personal visits from this Amir-ul-Mulk, redhanded from the murder of his brother, our friend and nominee. And things became still worse when Dr. Robertson arrived at Chitral, and found himself shut up in the fort with the murderer, and besieged by Sher Afzul. Misfortune makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows; and Dr. Robertson reported that his only hope was "by showing that he and Amir-ul-Mulk were working in thorough accord." Comment upon such a degrading situation seems unnecessary. The outcome of all this costly blundering was that our wretched puppet was murdered under our very eyes, and that our

representative immediately afterwards was found fighting for his life on the side of the murderer, for the purpose of preventing the people of Chitral having as their ruler the man of their choice, that man being the only competent member of the reigning family. So tangled was the knot woven by these marvellous diplomatists that it could not be unloosed. To cut it an expedition of 15,000 men was necessary at a cost of two millions, to be paid by the blameless and starving Indian rayat. *Quidquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.*

Does it not seem perverse that our diplomatic wisdom should thus always result in the selection of the unfittest? What is the secret of this perversity? The *causa causans* is inseparable from despotic rule. For it is the nature of despotic goverments, and of the agents of despotic governments, to fear and dislike strong and independent men; not recognising the force of the aphorism that, in politics as in physics, where there is no resistance there is no support. Hence despotism, for its tools, must have recourse to the servile and the venal, to those who are willing to betray their own countrymen, and who, when opportunity offers will betray their employers. Once, on a memorable occasion, Sir John Gorst, when Under-Secretary for India, in an unwonted outbrust of candour, bore emphatic testimony to this important truth. It was in the debate on Manipur, in July 1891, and he pointed out how, in that melancholy imbroglio, the Indian Government had shown its distrust of capable men. Referring to the fable of the tall poppies, and likening the Indian Government to the ancient tyrant of Rome, he declared that "Governments have always hated and discouraged independent and original talent, and they have always loved and promoted docile mediocrity. This is not a new policy. It is as old as Tarquinious

Superbus." Keeping strong and independent men at a distance, and relying for their information on spies and traitors, our political officers in these frontier posts became the dupes and tools of local intriguers. Seated on volcanoes they preach Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace, and write despatches to Simla that they are lords of all they survey, and that contentment reigns supreme among the tribes, with a diffused feeling of admiration for British wisdom and goodness—when (Oh, what a surprise!) the explosion takes place, and they are hoisted into the air with all their belongings. These are the "experts" upon whom the Government of India depends for guidance in frontier matters; and we in the House of Commons are asked to surrender our judgment and accept their scheme as gospel, however absurd and disastrous the results may be.

India, October 1895.

THE SKELETON AT THE (JUBILEE) FEAST.

[*The following is a series of suggestions towards the prevention of famine in India, published as "No. I. Congress Green Book" in July* 1897 :—]

INTRODUCTION.

At the approaching Indian Budget, upon the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair, I propose to move the following amendment, "That looking to the grievous sufferings endured by the people of India during the present year, this House is of opinion that a detailed and searching village enquiry should be instituted, in order to ascertain the causes which blight the industry of the cultivators, and render them helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence." I asked for this

enquiry last January, as an Amendment to the Address, pointing out that the rural villages include 80 per cent. of the population, that the village community is the microcosm of all India, and that if means could be discovered to make one village prosperous a clue would be obtained to make all India prosperous. I further pointed out that no Imperial Commission was required, no one need be sent out from England, no one need be withdrawn from famine duty, and no cost worth mentioning need be incurred. In each Province the local administration should select typical villages, and appoint a representative Committee of experienced men, official and non-official, European and Indian, to make a thorough, impartial, and fearless diagnosis of their condition, the investigation to be of a microscopic kind to detect the microbes which blight the rayat's industry. The rayat is a small and humble person. He does not want any heroic action, but patient and detailed enquiry into his grievances, and remedies suited to his condition. I indicated briefly in my speech the nature of the grievances, and the nature of the remedies desired.

Unfortunately this prayer for enquiry has (partly perhaps from a misapprehension as to its scope) been refused by Lord G. Hamilton; and I have been thus driven to lay before the House and the public some facts showing how the rayat has been brought to ruin. In the four articles, herewith reproduced from "India," I have detailed a few of the more prominent evils which afflict him, evils which have been officially admitted for the last thirty or forty years; and I claim to have proved (1) that these evils are the direct result of ill-advised and revolutionary changes introduced by our government, and (2) that when the proper remedies are pointed out the administration will neither apply them itself, nor permit others to do so. On the

contrary, when, after years of patient labour, practical schemes have been matured for improving the condition of the rayat, such movements have been crushed by the authorities, even when (as in one case) the scheme had received the hearty approval and support of the Viceroy in Council. I challenge the authorities to deny any one of the statements upon which these conclusions are based. To any candid mind the wonder is not that the people are in a state of economic collapse, but that they are able to exist at all. All these evils are quite unnecessary. With a rich soil, a fine climate, and peasantry skilful, industrious and frugal, India, if she gets fair play, ought to be a garden, not a place of desolation.

The unfortunate people of India have this year been suffering from almost every calamity to which a nation can be subjected. Their minds are distracted and they are almost driven to despair. How can any one find in his heart to regard them with anger, and advocate measures of harshness and rigour? Of all races in the world the Indians are the most gentle, the most docile, the most law-abiding, the easiest to govern, and the most grateful for kindness. Is there a talk of disaffection abroad? I say that if we are unable to gain the affection of such a race, we show ourselves unfit to be a ruling power. The first step towards gaining their affection is to make patient and careful enquiry into their grievances, and do our best to redress them.

I.—THE HISTORY OF A CRIME.

No one now doubts that an Indian famine is upon us in a most acute form, and all resources public and private must be strained to the utmost in order to mitigate the

calamity. But do what we will, death and suffering will be widespread. Can nothing be done as regards the future to ward off such disasters? Prevention is better than cure, — much better than mitigation. Cannot something be done beforehand to strengthen the feeble knees of the rayat, to make him more able to resist when the bad time comes? I most firmly believe that much may be done. Also I believe that now is the opportunity to impress this truth upon the public mind. For the attention of the British public is, for the moment at least, directed to India; its sympathy is aroused; and all the death and suffering will not be altogether in vain if the nation can be induced to open its eyes to the true condition of India, to distinguish between the symptoms and the disease, and to insist sternly on the removal of the causes which produce the disease. As a humble contribution towards an understanding of the facts, I put forward the following propositions: (1) That the excessive mortality of an Indian famine is due to the extreme poverty of the rural population, who do not possess a store of food, money or credit, sufficient to tide over one failure of harvest; (2). That practically mortality from famine would be prevented if the population had such a store of food, money, or credit; (3). That with reasonable reforms in the administration, the rayat would not only be in a position to possess such a store, but he might even become moderately prosperous; (4). That the India Office, as at present constituted, will neither initiate these necessary reforms itself, nor will it allow others to carry them out.

I will not, in my limited space, dwell upon the first two propositions. They stand to reason. For the people do not die out of mere perversity. They die because they are living from hand to mouth, and a failure of harvest

finds them without reserve of any kind to fall back upon. The disease from which India is suffering is the chronic destitution of the masses; their precarious existence on the verge of starvation : the failure of a harvest is only the push which sends them down into the abyss. It is clear that the people would not die if they had food in their houses, or if they had cash to buy it, or if they had credit to borrow it. Can the India Office suggest any other reason for people dying of hunger, except the want of these three things? I say that the mass of the cultivators have no store of grain in their houses. They used to have. In the earlier days of my service every rayat, however poor, had an underground store of millet put away, enough to keep his family for a year or two. But these little stores are now impossible, being swept away by the bailiffs in execution of the decrees of the civil debt courts which, to the destruction of the peasantry, we have set up on the English model in the rural districts. Nor are the rayats any better off as regards either cash or credit. They not only possess nothing, but less than nothing, being for the most part hopelessly in debt to the village money-lender.

Passing on then from the two first propositions I proceed to the third, which after all is the most important, for if it can be established that, by adminstrative reforms, the rayat may be placed in a position to tide over one bad season, then the famine problem will practically be solved. To establish this proposition the public will require something more specific than general statements. Thomas Carlyle used to say, "Give me facts, feed me with facts"! I will, therefore, give some facts, the accuracy of which I can guarantee—a modern instance, within my own personal knowledge—and will relate briefly the history of a scheme by which the rayat might, ten years ago, have been

relieved, from his desperate condition ; and might even now be relieved, if the veto of the India Office were removed.

In approaching this subject, the first important fact that the British reader has to realise is that though the rayat is desperately poor, he need not be so, nor ought he to be so. The poet speaks of the "Wealth of Ind." The phrase seems a mockery, looking to the present condition of the country. But none the less India possesses the conditions of almost boundless agricultural wealth. In her vast domain she has climates suited to every known product. She has a fertile soil and an unfailing sun, with abundant labour, skilful and cheap. All that is wanted is working capital. Give the rayat that, on reasonable terms, so that he may be able to command a proper supply of water and manure, and he will produce in perfection every valuable crop known to cultivation. But unfortunately at present the rayat, as a class, has no capital. By a harsh and rigid system of land taxation, and by the introduction of debt courts unsuited to the peasantry we have drained the rayat of capital, and made him the bondslave of the village money-lender. The disorganisation and ruin thence resulting cannot be better described than in the words of Sir George Wingate, the father of the Bombay Revenue system :

> "This miserable struggle between the debtor and creditor, is,' he says, "thoroughly debasing to both. The creditor is made by it a grasping hard-hearted oppressor ; the debtor a crouching false-hearted slave. It is disheartening to contemplate, and yet it would be a weakness to conceal the fact, that this antagonism of classes and degradation of the people which is fast spreading over the land, is the work of our laws and our rule."

What the rayat wants is to be delivered from this bondage, "the work of our laws and our rule," and to be supplied with sufficient working capital at reasonable rates. He may then be left alone, for he is sturdy, skilful, and

industrious. He will at once proceed to dig a well on his ancestral land, and supply himself with water and manure and, in the end, he will turn the whole of India into a garden. There will be no talk of famine then. Moreover, the rayat will then be able, as he is able in well-governed Native States like Mysore, Baroda, Bhavnagar and Gondal, to pay, contentedly and without difficulty, double that which in British territory is squeezed out of him with so much labour and sorrow.

Now the recognised method of supplying working capital to peasant proprietors is by the establishment of Agricultural Banks. In Germany alone there are some 2,000 such banks, doing a business amounting to something like 150 millions sterling with immense benefit to the rural population. Every other country in Europe has followed the example of Germany ; the Autocrat of all the Russias started such banks with liberal support ; and even the unspeakable Turk has made some movements in the same direction. In India alone nothing has been done. The Autocrat of the India Office would neither move himself nor allow others to move. I will state the exact facts showing how he baffled and defeated a moderate and carefully-matured proposal to enable the Indian rayat to share in these benefits.

The scheme referred to took shape at Poona in 1882. The object of the promoters, of whom I was one, was to frame a scheme upon the lines of the Continental system, while adapting the details to local circumstances. Especially we had to provide for the settlement of old debts ; we had to restore the friendly relations between the rayats and the village money-lenders ; we had to secure for our project the hearty co-operation of both these classes ; and we had to induce the local native capitalists to give us their

financial support. Last but not least, we had to claim from Government concessions similar to those accorded to such institutions on the Continent of Europe. After much careful enquiry and many local meetings, all the parties concerned agreed to the scheme. The rayats gladly welcomed the proposal; the village money-lenders were prepared to co-operate; and the native bankers were ready to provide capital. A public meeting was then held at Poona, under the presidency of the Collector of the District; resolutions were passed for the establishment of an agricultural bank, and an influential Committee was appointed. This Committee waited upon the Governor (Sir James Fergusson) and set forth their proposals for an experimental bank in the Purandhar Taluka of the Poona Collectorate. His Excellency received the deputation in a very cordial manner, expressed himself personally favourable to the scheme, and promised that he and his colleagues would give it their best consideration. Accordingly the scheme was forwarded to the Viceroy in Council, whom it reached at a favourable moment. The Indian Government, as the general landlord, had always desired to help the rayat with loans for land improvement. But from various causes the attempt to make these advances through official agency had failed in every part of India. And the Government had at last come to the conclusion that it must look to private enterprise for any real progress in this direction. The Marquis of Ripon was then Viceroy, and Sir Evelyn Baring (now Lord Cromer) who was Finance Minister, had personal experience of agricultural banks, so that the Poona scheme received immediate and sympathetic consideration, as providing the exact means desired to carry out the Government policy. And a very important despatch, No 638 of 5th December, 1882, was sent from Simla to

the Bombay Government, expressing the satisfaction of the Viceroy in Council with the proposals made, and setting forth in detail the action which the Government were prepared to take. Subject to certain minor conditions, the Government of India accepted the Poona proposals. They were willing to appoint a Commission for the liquidation of the rayats' debts within a limited experimental area; they would advance, in the first instance, the cash (some 6½ lakhs) necessary for the composition of these debts; they would, as regards the bank, remit a part of the stamp duty on documents, and the court fees in suits; and they would concede to the bank the privilege of recovering its advances through the revenue officers on the same footing as advances made by the Government. While granting these important concessions which are on the lines of those allowed to agricultural banks in Europe, the Government of India was careful to explain to the Bombay Government that similar privileges would not necessarily be granted in future to other similar banks. The Poona bank was, in fact, treated as a pioneer enterprise, the object being to make a practical experiment in a limited area, with the hope that when the system was once established it would spread wherever needed, and, to use the words of the despatch, "prove of incalculable benefit to the whole country." In conclusion, the Government of India stated that they attached very great importance to the experiment and asked the Bombay Government to undertake the working of the measure. In reply the Bombay Government, in their despatch of 5th April, 1883, stated their willingness to give the scheme a trial.

In this way, after no little labour and negotiation, every interest and every authority in India was brought into substantial agreement as regards the scheme. And on the

31st of May, 1884, a unanimous despatch signed by the Viceroy and his colleagues, was forwarded to England setting forth fully the circumstances of the case, and asking the sanction of the Secretary of State to the proposed experiment. "We are anxious," they said, "to give effect to a scheme which we believe to be advocated on purely disinterested grounds, which can, under the experimental conditions proposed, be carefully watched, and which is likely, if successful, to be productive of much benefit to the country."

Nothing now was wanted except the formal sanction of the India Office. But this was just what we could not get. How the project suffered shipwreck almost in sight of land, and how our labour of years came to nought, I will presently relate. But before doing so I ought briefly to describe the friendly reception which was accorded to the scheme by public opinion in England. While the negotiations were still proceeding in India I went home on furlough, and was asked by the bank promoters to make the scheme known in England. Accordingly, on arrival, I communicated the whole circumstances to two of India's best friends, Mr. John Bright and Sir James Caird. They sympathised warmly with the scheme; and Mr. Bright consented to take the chair at a meeting held at Exeter Hall on the 5th of July, 1883, under the auspices of the East India Association, when I read a paper on "The Poona Rayats' Bank." A discussion followed, in which Sir James Caird and other high authorities took part. The chairman's speech and the debate generally were strongly favourable to the scheme, and next day the *Times*, *Daily News*, *Standard*, and other London papers gave their approval to the proposal. Next it was necessary to make the scheme known in Lancashire. And accord-

ingly, on the invitation of the directors, I read a paper before the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, under the presidency of Mr. G. Lord, the Chairman. The paper was entitled "Government Concessions to Agricultural Banks in India." A resolution in cordial support of the scheme was moved by the late Mr. John Slagg, then senior member for Manchester, and seconded by Mr. (now Sir William) Houldsworth, M. P., and was carried unanimously. And in accordance with a further resolution this expression of opinion was forwarded to her Majesty's Secretary of State for India. Further, a corresponding committee was formed, including the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Chamber, in order to give the scheme continued support. Finally, with a view to placing the bank's debentures on the English money-market, it was thought desirable to approach the authorities of high finance in London. Accordingly, on the introduction of Mr. Bright, I had an interview with Sir Nathaniel (now Lord) Rothschild M. P., who had already expressed himself interested in the subject. He agreed to give the scheme favourable consideration, and added that if the terms seemed satisfactory from a financial point of view, he did not think there would be difficulty in obtaining the necessary capital.

There only remains to tell the sad conclusion of the tale. How did the case stand? The Indian peasantry were in great destitution, being deeply sunk in debt, and in chronic danger of famine. A practical remedy, tested by long and varied experience, was proposed. In India the authorities were desirous of giving this remedy a trial in a cautious experimental way; all public opinion in India and in England had declared itself in favour of the movement; only the India Office at Westminster stood in the way, and forbade the experiment to be

tried. It seems almost incredible, but such is the fact. How the scheme was baffled by delay; how the promoters were wearied out by interminable correspondence on theoretical objections and hypothetical difficulties ; and how finally the proposals were met by a pointblank refusal in the House of Commons on the 18th of August, 1887 ; is it not all written in a Blue-book of seventy-two closely printed pages ? In any case the scheme was done to death. To this day I do not know whose hand struck the fatal blow. But the guilt lies with the India Office. The scheme represented the care and labour of many minds for many years ; it had in it promise of relief to suffering millions ; and it had no open enemies. But as it entered the portals of the India Office it was stabbed in the dark, and I say that the act was a crime against the people of India.

I must reserve for another occasion the story of the fate which befell our proposals to establish conciliation courts in the rural districts, and to modify the method of revenue collections in accordance with the wishes and habits of the rayats.

II.—THE STARVING RAYAT.

If in this country a pauper died in the work-house from starvation, we should at any rate hold an inquest on his body ; and some one would be made responsible. The master of the work-house might prove that when the man had reached the stage of collapse, superhuman efforts were made to restore him ; but this zeal on the part of the officials would not alone suffice to clear them from a charge of manslaughter. The questions asked would be, How did

the man get into this state of collapse? What was his usual diet; and who was responsible for his being all skin and bone? Was a proper diagnosis ever made of his case; and were proper remedies applied before it was too late? Not only would such questions be asked, but those responsible would be compelled to give full and true answers. The master would not be allowed to stifle enquiry on the ground that the season was not convenient; nor would he be permitted to defy and ridicule the questioners, and to prance off, singing the praises of his subordinates, and of himself. If he would not be allowed to do this, why should this sort of thing be tolerated in those who are responsible for deaths from starvation in an Indian famine? I say to the Secretary of State for India, *Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur*; the difference being that in India it is not a question of one death from starvation, but of hundreds of thousands, and millions of deaths. Moreover, as regards the starving rayat, something worse than neglect is charged. The patient is now in a state of collapse, from chronic destitution and indebtedness, a ready prey to famine and pestilence; and I assert that it is the direct action of the Indian revenue authorities which has brought him into that state. The Government of India cannot plead ignorance; for I will show that it has had full warning, and that it has itself admitted the truth of the charge. Last month I told the story of agricultural banks as a proposed remedy for the rayat's fatal indebtedness. The melancholy episode I have now to relate deals with the cause of that indebtedness. The money-lender, no doubt, is the ultimate instrument of the rayat's destruction, but the originating cause of his ruin is to be found in the harsh, rigid, and unsuitable methods of revenue assessment and collection, which have paralysed

his energies, and placed him a helpless victim in the hands of his creditors. How this has happened I will briefly set forth.

To understand the position we must bear in mind that according to ancient Hindu custom, the claim of the Government, on account of land revenue, is for a certain share of the gross produce of every field. Upon this point the ordinance of Manu is as follows: "The land revenue consists of a share of grain and of all other agricultural produce. Of grain $\frac{1}{12}$th, $\frac{1}{8}$th or $\frac{1}{6}$th, according to the soil and the labour necessary to cultivate it. This may also be raised in cases of emergency as far as $\frac{1}{4}$th." Now this reasonable method, enjoined by the religious law and approved by immemorial custom, suited the people exactly; acting as a sliding scale; so that in a bad year the rayat had to give but little; if he had no crop he gave nothing; but in a bumper year the Government shared in the general prosperity, the rayat giving gladly out of his abundance. Under the system no harassing and untimely demand for cash ever came upon the rayat, because the claim of Government did not arise till the crop was reaped, and then all that the Government had to do was to take its share. Now, our great mistake consisted in breaking up this ancient customary arrangement, instead of developing and perfecting it. In place of this elastic method, which adapted the demand to the variations of the season, we have, for the sake of official convenience, placed upon the rayat all the risk of bad seasons, a financial burden which he is not able to bear. Instead of taking the revenue in kind according to the amount of the crop, we have fixed a rigid cash assessment on each field, and this amount must be paid punctually in cash on a certain day, whether the crop is good or bad. This method of fixing an average

demand, to be levied in cash irrespective of the crop, may suit the case of capitalist farmers. But it has fairly broken the back of the rayat, who is a mere peasant living from hand to mouth. Also he cannot be brought to see the justice of making a demand upon him when he has not even food for himself and his family. He says, "In former days there were Rajas that were good, and others that were bad; the good ones took a small share of our crop, and the bad a large share; but Heaven never before sent us a Sirkar (Government) which takes from us when we have no crop at all." In such matters popular sentiment is not a negligible quantity, and a wise Government will not only do justice but also be careful to convince the people that it is just. I remember well, in the early days of my service, a benevolent Collector trying to persuade a venerable village Patel of the advantages of a fixed average payment. But the old man replied by a parable. He said, "Oh Saheb, I will relate to you a story. A traveller coming to a river found a man sitting there, and asked him how deep the river was. The man replied, four feet deep, so the traveller proceeded to cross the river. It was true that the river was four feet deep *on the average*, but there was a deep hole in the middle, and into that hole the traveller fell, and was drowned. Now if all we rayats go to the bottom in a bad year, what good will a moderate assessment do to us after that?" This is the native view of the case. But how did the innovation operate in practice? The rayat as a class possesses no cash. So the immediate effect was to drive him to the money-lender, as a suppliant, in order to get the necessary rupees. And this was the beginning of sorrows. No doubt before this he had dealings with the money-lender if he wanted cash to dig a well, or buy a pair of bullocks, or

celebrate a marriage; but these borrowings were at his own time, aud by his own free choice. In such transactions he could negotiate his loans on equal terms. But it altogether changed the relative position of debtor and creditor when the rayat was obliged, at all costs, to find a certain sum on a certain day. And in practice the new system proved more destructive than might, at first sight, appear; and this was so from three reasons, all of which tend to prostrate the rayat at the feet of the money-lender. The first of these reasons is that under our smart official system extreme punctuality of payment is insisted on. The instalment must be paid on a certain fixed date, the result being that the rayats over the whole country side must find the cash on one and the same day. This of course immensely tightens the money-market and puts the local capitalist into a position to dictate his own terms. Secondly, the Government demands payment on a date when the crop is unripe and still upon the ground. This is done in order that the crop may be available for seizure in case payment is not punctually made. But, of course, the effect is to make the demand fall upon the rayat at the time when he is least able to meet it, when all his resources have been expended on his cultivation and maintenance, and before his crop is marketed. But the third aggravating circumstance is the most grievous of all, and that is the severity with which the revenue authorities deal with the defaulter: everything he possesses is liable to seizure and sale; his house and his land, his plough and his oxen, his bedding and his cooking utensils. And those who know how dearly the rayat loves his ancestral acres, will realise that to save them he will be ready to sign any bond that Shylock himself might feel inclined to place before him. It depends entirely upon the tender mercies of the money-

lender whether the interest charged is 25 per cent., or 50 per cent. or 100 per cent., or more. How is the rayat ever to pay back these debts? As a matter of fact he never will be able to do so. For when the crop is reaped all the rayats are alike anxious to sell; the market is glutted; and the village money-lender, who is also the village grain-dealer, takes over the crop at his own valuation, leaving to the rayat and his family barely enough to keep body and soul together till next harvest. Thus, year by year, the debt swells with no prospect of repayment. It is evident that this state of affairs could not go on for ever. And in point of fact things came to a crisis in the Deccan Districts of the Bombay Presidency, during my service, about the year 1875; when the money-lenders refused to make further advances to their debtors, who already owed them far more than they could ever pay. What was the result? The revenue officers of Government were suddenly brought face to face with a very serious difficulty. Hitherto however painful the process of finding the rupees had been to the rayat, it had all been as easy as shelling peas for the officials as the mere threat of eviction sufficed to send the rayat to the money-lender, and then the rupees were forthcoming. But now this source of supply had dried up, and the Government officers had to take action on their own account. Accordingly they proceeded to wholesale attachments of land; and hundreds of holdings were sold by auction, realising only nominal prices. To give an idea of what went on, I may mention that in the Bhimthadi Taluka alone, of the Poona Collectorate, the number of defaulting rayats in 1873-4 was 4,341, the amount due from them being Rs. 82,421. To realize this sum about 200,000, acres of land, assessed at Rs. 1,35,000, were sold by auction yielding the paltry sum of Rs. 15,010, while Government

bought in, at merely nominal prices, a large acreage for which no purchasers could be found. Looking to the attachment of the rayats to their ancestral land, it is not to be wondered that these proceedings excited the most bitter exasperation; but being unable to resist the Government, they turned their anger against the creditors. Agrarian disturbances broke out all over the districts; the money-lenders were attacked in their houses; their bonds, decrees, and account-books were burnt; and they themselves were driven out of the villages.

These disturbances were put down by military force, and a mixed Commission, known as the Deccan Riots Commission, was appointed to enquire into the facts and causes of the outbreak. This enquiry was conducted in a most business-like way, from village to village, the exact financial position of each rayat being ascertained, with the history and causes of his ruin. And I have no hesitation in saying that the five volumes of the Commissioners' report contain the most trustworthy record in existence regarding the rayat's economic condition. Their conclusions were in substance: First, that the rayat was driven to the money-lender by the harsh and rigid enforcement of the Government revenue demand; and secondly that once in the coils of the money-lender the rayat's case was hopeless, owing to the irresistible weapons furnished to the creditor by our Debt Courts. The Commissioners at the same time exploded certain time-honoured fallacies, such as the theory that the ruin of the rayat was caused by his extravagance in marriage and other ceremonies, the Commissioners reporting that for these purposes he did not spend more than was reasonable under the circumstances.

The report and recommendations of the Commissioners led, in 1879, to legislation for the relief of the Deccan

agriculturists, and a Bill for this purpose was introduced into the Viceroy's Council by the Honourable Mr. (now Sir Theodore) Hope. The debates on the Bill are very instructive reading. The conclusions of the Commission were accepted ; but, unfortunately, the Bill dealt only with the sins of the money-lender, leaving altogether untouched the more serious sins of the Revenue department. In justice to the Council it must, however, be stated that they did not seek to dissemble or cloak these sins. Even Mr. Hope, himself a Bombay Revenue Officer, admitted in his opening speech that "to our revenue system must in candour be ascribed some share in the indebtedness of the rayat." And the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab (Sir R. Egerton), who had a seat in the Legislative Council, spoke out very plainly, declaring his opinion that the peasant was driven into insolvency by the great stringency with which Government exacted their revenue as a fixed sum in cash at fixed times : "It seemed to him that too little attention had been paid to this cause which must in a great degree have contributed to, if it did not entirely originate, the difficulties of the Deccan rayat." Mindful, doubtless, of the injunction in the parable, His Honour urged the revenue authorities to show the money-lender an example of moderation : "He thought it desirable that at the same time as measures of relief were afforded to the rayat from his private creditor the Government, which appeared as a public creditor of the rayat, should also take measures to, in some way, lighten the pressure of its own demand." And he recommended that Government should so modify its revenue system as to take upon itself the risks of a scanty rainfall and a precarious crop, instead of placing all these risks on the rayat who had shown himself unfit to meet them. These views were

concurred in by the other speakers, including the Viceroy (Lord Lytton). But, unfortunately, nothing whatever was done by the Relief Bill to relieve the rayat from this pressure which had broken his back. The harsh and rigid revenue system was left severely alone. All the Bill did was to disarm the money-lender, so that he could not recover from the rayat the sums he had lent him to pay the Government demand. The money-lender was made the scapegoat; and the Government, without a blush, took up the following characteristic position. Having admitted that its own exactions had driven the rayat to the money-lender, and having for years drained the money-lenders' capital into its own treasury, it showed its magnanimity in purely vicarious fashion, by forgiving the rayat his debt to the money-lender, while leaving untouched its own revenue exactions, the originating cause of all the mischief.

Now what would commonsense suggest as the natural remedy for all this confusion and misery? Surely, a return to the good old rule the simple plan; the ancient customary usage, so dear to a conservative race, which should never have been upset. In the debate Mr. Hope well said that when we overturn "institutions which popular consent has maintained for above a score of centuries, we sometimes forget that we are not the bearers of a political revelation from heaven." It is not too late even now to retrace our steps, if we proceed experimentally and with caution. And this is what was recommended by Sir James Caird, when, as a Famine Commissioner, he brought to the consideration of these questions an unbiassed judgment, and an unrivalled experience on all matters relating to land. His proposal was that experiments in levying the revenue in kind should be made in a few selected villages in various parts of India, the duty being

entrusted to special officers known to be intelligent and painstaking. If by such experiments we could discover how one village can be made prosperous we should have a clue which would help us to make every village prosperous. In accordance with the proposal of Sir James Caird, I took steps to organise an experiment on the lines suggested. It was in the Ahmednagar Collectorate, which was one of the disturbed districts in 1875. There is not space here to set forth the detailed arrangement. But the proposal was to offer to the rayats in a selected village a Permanent Settlement in kind, limiting the ordinary Government demand to a certain fixed share, say $\frac{1}{16}$th (one anna in the rupee) of the gross produce. I suggested that fraction because in Bombay the revenue authorities profess not to take more than that proportion. Then, further, in order to encourage improvements, I proposed to fix for each field a quit-rent, say $\frac{3}{16}$ths of an average dry crop, which the rayat might at any time elect to pay in cash instead of the $\frac{1}{16}$th of the actual gross produce. An arrangement of this kind suited equally all classes of cultivators; the ignorant and apathetic man handing over his one anna share of millet at harvest time, and not being driven to the money-lender; while the enterprising man would dig a well, and elect to pay the cash quit-rent as soon as he found that the increased value of his irrigated crop (sugar-cane, cotton, spices, fruit, or what not), made that alternative profitable to him. Similarly, as regards the collection of the Government dues in kind, the best native models were to be followed, the Government claim being assigned for a certain annual payment to persons of high character and good local position, on such terms as to interest them in the improvement and prosperity of the land. In selecting suitable persons for the proposed

experiment I received much assistance from the American missionaries in the neighbourhood. They themselves cultivated a considerable amount of land, held from Government on the usual terms, and were in thorough touch with the villagers, knowing their language perfectly, and mingling with them in their daily life. With their help I was able to mature my scheme; and the Collector of the District forwarded it to the Government with an expression of his approval. Those directly interested in the experiment and best able to judge, were of opinion that the scheme would give contentment to the rayat; a field of useful enterprise to the capitalist who desired to occupy the honourable position of a land holder; and to the Government an increasing revenue, up to a possible amount, three times the existing demand. It might have been thought that a carefully prepared proposal giving reasonable hope of such benefits, without cost to Government, and with peace and harmony all round, would have been welcomed by the authorities. But this was not so. The Collector who sent up the scheme was sharply rebuked for seeking to interfere with the existing order of things; and the proposal which promised such interesting and profitable results was nipped in the bud. A subsequent attempt met with a similar fate.

In the Debate above referred to, the rayat was described as "ruined, despairing, embittered"; and nothing has been done in these long years to remove the cause of his ruin, his despair, and his bitterness. To sum up, the case stands as follows. By its sins of omission and commission the Indian administration has brought the masses of the people into a state of economic collapse, so that they die like flies at the first touch of scarcity or disease; but when the remedies are pointed out to it, it will

neither apply them itself, nor permit others to do so; even enquiry is refused. With shortsighted jealousy it has taken upon itself the whole responsibility of disaster; and sooner or later the penalties arising out of that responsibility will be exacted.

III.—THE RAYAT AND HIS RACK-RENT.

There is an irreconcileable difference of opinion regarding the condition of the Indian rayat. Lord George Hamilton and Sir H. Fowler describe him as a fat and prosperous person, very lighty taxed, pleasantly conscious of "the infinite benefits of British rule." On the other hand I assert, and Indian public opinion is with me on this point, that he is a wretched starveling, "ruined, despairing, embittered," crushed by burdens too heavy for him to bear, and paralysed in his industry by the operation of laws altogether unsuited to his condition. Here is a clear and simple issue of fact. Why should this issue not be tried? I have challenged enquiry by moving an Amendment on the Address, the most public and formal way in which such a challenge can be conveyed: but enquiry has been refused. Lord George Hamilton does not find the season convenient. As regards the famine he is too busy dealing with the symptom to make a diagnosis of the disease; not realizing that this is the method of the quack rather than of the physician. I must, therefore, wait and continue placing the facts and figures before the public. Perhaps when a few hundred thousands, or millions, of these fat and prosperous people have died from starvation, the House of Commons may be willing to spare a few minutes to reconsider its decision that no enquiry is necessary.

What I asked for by my amendment was, not a roving Commission, but a careful local enquiry in two or three typical villages of each Province, in order to ascertain the real facts regarding the rayat's economic condition. I took my illustration from the work of the bacteriologist, and pointed out that the individual rayat must be put under the microscope, in order to detect the microbes which blight his industry, and I indicated the nature of the mischievous organisms to be sought for. In the March number of "India" I brought some light to bear on the microbe which has its nidus in the harsh and unsuitable system of collecting the land revenue. This month I will deal with the land revenue itself, the microbe of rack-rent, which is the originating cause of the rayat's woes; and I will show (1) that the instructions of the Secretary of State limiting the amount of the Government demand are entirely disregarded in practice, and (2) that by arbitrary enhancements of rents the rayat's improvements have been confiscated, and he is compelled to make up the Government demand by stinting himself and his family in food, and by borrowing from the money-lender. For proof of these statements I will now refer to official documents.

The principle which was to govern land assessments was first distinctly formulated in an elaborate despatch from the Court of Directors dated 17th December, 1856. It was then declared that

> The right of Government is not a rent which consists of all the surplus produce after paying the cost of cultivation, and the profits of agricultural stock but a land revenue only, which ought, if possible, to be so lightly assessed as to leave a surplus or rent to the occupier, whether he, in fact, let the land to others or retain it in his own hands.

The Government claim was in fact to be not a rent but a tax upon rent. In 1864 Sir Charles Wood reaffirmed this principle, and went beyond the Court of Directors by

fixing 50 per cent. of the net produce as the amount ordinarily claimable on account of the Government demand. Now, these assurances of 1856 and 1864 have never been withdrawn by any competent Authority. They constitute in fact, the Magna Charta of the peasant cultivator; and the friends of the rayat should never cease to appeal to them, and to claim that either the principle therein laid down should be effectually carried out in practice, or else that some more suitable method should be adopted, based upon ascertained facts and according with the customs and wishes of the people. If the rayat, after paying the assessment, were left with the wages of labour, the profit of his stock and improvements, and one half of the true rent, he would have nothing more to ask for. And we may safely say that if, like the Irish tenant, he were able to enforce this limitation by suit in the Civil Courts, there would exist no Agrarian question as between the Government and the rayat; and the foundation would be laid for a contented and prosperous body of peasant proprietors. But unfortunately the principle laid down in these declarations has not been carried out in practice; the application having been left to the judgment or caprice of the Settlement Departments in India, a special agency, the reputation, and even existence of which depends upon its success in expanding the Government revenue. Hence the rates levied usually absorb, not the half, but the whole of the rental, besides eating into the profits of capital and the wages of labour. The shearer of the Indian sheep, disregarding his master's orders, not only takes the whole of the fleece, but allows his shears to bite deep into the skin and into the flesh.

That this is admitted will be seen from a very important document which forms Appendix I of the report of the

Famine Commissioners; a document which may well be studied by those who desire to understand the causes which render the rayat powerless to withstand even the first attacks of famine. The appendix referred to reproduces, under the modest title of "Notes on Indian Land Revenue," a group of Minutes recorded in 1875 by the highest authorities at the India Office; the general question being, What is the nature and limit of the Government demand under a rayatwari settlement? and, Under what circumstances may an enhancement be equitably claimed? The discussion originated with the proposal of Lord Hobart, the Governor of Madras, to stop absolutely the enhancement operations of the Settlement Department, "which with more propriety might be called the Unsettlement Department." He wisely deprecated the disturbance, loss, and vexation involved in the periodical re-assessment of every field of a vast peasant proprietary, and with all the earnestness of strong conviction advocated a statesmanlike policy giving to the cultivators the full enjoyment of their improvements, and securing their lasting attachment to the British Government. It is upon these proposals that we find recorded a valuable Minute of Sir Louis Mallet, Permanent Under-Secretary of State, followed by Sir George Campbell, Sir Henry Maine, Sir H. Montgomery, Sir Erskine Perry, and Sir Bartle Frere, the debate being closed by Lord Salisbury, then Secretary of State for India.

There is not here space to give even the substance of these Minutes. But it may be noted that no one among the writers even pretended to think that under existing arrangements one-half the net produce is really left with the rayat. It was in fact admitted that Sir C. Wood's rule had become "a mere paper instruction." But I will quote the words of Sir Bartle Frere, himself a Revenue

officer, as to what the Settlement Departments really have done and are doing in India. His opinion was that throughout India the State demand rarely, if ever, fulfilled the requirements of the India Office instruction, or could be rightly described as limited to a fixed share of the true rent :

"The reader," he says "of much of the literature relating to Indian land revenue would suppose that it came for the most part, or at least very frequently, under this class as a true land tax. But with the exception of a very few localities, almost infinitesimally small in proportion to the total area which pays land revenue in India, such a true land tax is practically unknown."

In the opinion, therefore, of so experienced an administrator as Sir Bartle Frere, compliance, in this vital matter, with the instructions of the Secretary of State was "practically unknown." Dealing with the Bombay Presidency, of which he had been Governor, Sir B. Frere describes the assessment as coming for the most part under the three following economic classes : (a) *a land tax fixed more or less arbitrarily*, and absorbing a varying proportion of the true rent ; (b) *a full rent*, leaving nothing to the cultivator but the wages of his labour and the interest on his capital ; and (c) *a rent and something more*, trenching on the wages of labour or the profits of capital. With reference to this last class he observes .

It might seem almost impossible that the Government demand should now amount to what is defined as class (c), rent and something more, but in my early years, when assessments were high and prices low; I often met with whole districts in the Dekkhan where the cultivator could not pay the Government demand without trenching on his own wages as labourer, to the extent of his having less for himself than a hired labourer would require.

To Sir Bartle Frere's three classes, Sir Louis Mallet adds another, for he says :

I am also informed that in many cases lands have been assessed which barely pay the cost of cultivation and yield no rent at all.

This may be called class (d) *where the land yields no rent at all*, and the assessment is taken wholly from that portion of the crop which represents the wages of labour. And to these four classes I must regretfully add yet a fifth and still more grievous case, class (e) *where the total crop is insufficient to pay the cost of cultivation*, and where the assessment must be paid out of wages earned elsewhere or from cash obtained from the money-lender. That this class (e) not only exists, but that it embraces the vast majority of holdings in the Dekkhan, will be clear to any-one who will take the trouble to study the bulky and dole-ful literature which has accumulated round the case of the distressed rayat: the report with appendices of the Dekkhan Riots Commission; the report of the Famine Commissioners, with the evidence taken before them; and the enquiries and debates in connection with the Dekkhan Agriculturists Relief Act. Here facts and statistics will be found in abundance, showing that the pauperism of the ordinary rayat is an increasing evil; that it is a necessary consequence of his present economic position, and that it primarily arises from the absolute insufficiency of the total produce of the land to maintain the existing population and to meet the demands of a costly European administra-tion. Instead of improving matters are steadily getting worse; for the fertility of the land is becoming exhausted; the population to be supported is increasing; while the demands of the Government are constantly enhanced.

To illustrate the process which is going on I will give the exact figures with regard to a couple of typical villages, the detailed condition of which was investi-gated by a judicial officer under my own personal observation. The first is the village of Nepti—a village containing a fair amount of irrigated land and favourably

situated on a road near the town of Ahmednagar. As regards each holding the enquiry ascertained in detail the amount of the assessment, the cash expenses of cultivation and the cost of family maintenance, together with the value of the produce and the amount of income derived by the occupant from other sources. And from the totals it appeared that the gross produce of the whole village was worth Rs. 12,001 and the income from other sources was Rs. 3,731, giving a total income of Rs. 15,732. On the other hand, bare family maintenance amounted to Rs. 11,345, the cash expenses of cultivation to Rs. 3,007, and the assessment to Rs. 2,392, giving a total of Rs. 16,744 as the outgoings of the village. In ordinary years, therefore, the income was insufficient to meet the expenditure. And there was besides a total debt on the village of Rs. 33,132, which represented a further annual charge for interest of Rs. 7 or 8,000, and indicated a steady progress towards absolute ruin. In villages where there is little or no irrigation the case is still worse. Thus in the neighbouring village of Chas the total crop was found to be worth Rs, 7,939; whereas the cost of cultivation, including maintenance, amounted to Rs. 12,136. Here the assessment could not have been paid at all had it not been for the considerable sum of Rs. 4,619 earned by labour apart from agriculture; by carrying grass and firewood, by working on the roads, by cart-hire, and by other miscellaneous employments rendered possible by the vicinity of a large town. Such supplementary means of livelihood are, of course, wanting in secluded villages far away from any large market or centre of industry. It may be noted that about the same time Mr. Irwin, in his book "The Garden of India," made similar calculations for one or two typical villages in Oudh, with similar result; and he gives it as his opinion

that the only way the peasant makes both ends meet is by stinting himself in food and eating less than is necessary for health. And the conclusion is that by reason of exhausted soil, increasing population, and excessive revenue demands, a condition of things has, in a large portion of India, been produced a full degree lower than that described by Sir. Bartle Frere as existing in his early days.

Now I would ask any sane person, Is a peasantry so situated in a condition to invite large and wholesale enhancements of the revenue demand? One would have thought not, but that is not the wisdom with which we are governed. In all the recent revisions the fiscal screw is being vigorously applied by the revenue authorities:

> **" Half-ignorant, they turned an easy wheel.**
> **That set sharp racks at work to pinch and peel."**

One or two specimens must suffice here by way of illustration. In the Assam Valley districts the authorities managed to create serious agrarian disturbances by a general enhancement amounting to 53 per cent. In deference apparently to the disturbances the enhancement was reduced to 32 per cent. In the Bombay Presidency there existed a Standing Rule of the Department that enhancements should not exceed 33 per cent. upon a whole Taluka, 66 per cent. on any one village, and 100 per cent. upon any individual holding. Surely such a scale of increased rent should content the greediest landlord. But not so the Government. Not long ago in the House of Commons I questioned Sir H. Fowler regarding the case of the Kolaba district, where the increase on the whole Panwel Taluka was 44·8 per cent. in certain villages over 100 per cent., and in certain individual holdings over 1,000 per cent. He had to admit the correctness of the figures, but upheld these rack-rents. If redress cannot be got in such cases, what hope is there for others?

I have stated a few grim facts, which cannot be denied; and again I ask for enquiry. Such an investigation as I have described at Nepti and Chas need not take away a single man from famine duty; and the cost would be quite trifling: indeed experienced retired officials could be found to do such work out of mere charity and pity. But the high authorities to whom we appeal scorn such humble methods: they will not wash in Jordan, and be clean. They prefer heroic methods; and their idea of heroism seems to be noisy self-praise, contempt for the opinion of others, and resentment of outside criticism. In my humble opinion there would be more heroism in regret for past failures, anxiety to learn, and patient research into the causes which are bringing sorrow and death into the homes of the poor.

IV.—CONCILIATION OR LITIGATION?

In support of my plea for a detailed village enquiry into the causes which have led to the ruin of the rayat, I have indicated, in previous articles, three directions in which those causes may be sought: the disorganisation of agricultural credit; the harsh and unsuitable methods of revenue collections; and the rack-rents exacted by the Government. Many other causes arising out of our centralised and unsympathetic system of administration have contributed to blight the rayat's industry; but none more than that which I will notice to-day, I mean the establishment in our rural district, of debt-courts on the European model. These Courts were, no doubt, established with the best intentions, but in this respect they are only a type of the many blunders committed in our Indian administration from want of touch with the

people aggravated by our insular self-esteem, and lack of imagination, which makes us assume that what suits us must necessarily be beneficial to others. These debt-courts planted among the rural population, always remind me of Sydney Smith's rough joke about beef for the Hindus, and his ironical proposal to establish Government beef shops in all the villages of our Indian Empire: John Bull himself likes a beef steak; why then should not the Hindus also be similarly supplied, and thus share in the blessings of British rule?

The subject of these debt courts is a large one, and cannot be dealt with adequately within the limits of one article; so I will content myself with a brief exposition of the following propositions: (*a*) That the rayat cannot get on without the village money-lender, and that under the old native system the relations between the two classes were friendly and beneficial; (*b*) That by the introduction of debt-courts upon the European model these friendly relations have been destroyed, and the rayat has been made the serf of the money-lender; and (*c*) That relief may be obtained by the revival and scientific development of the old system of conciliation and arbitration, by means of "Panchayats," or village councils.

In order to illustrate these propositions in their order, we may take the case of the Bombay Deccan, partly because in those districts the chronic discord created by our civil courts broke out into open war, and partly because we possess in the five volumes which contain the Report of the Deccan Riots Commission a great body of facts collected on the spot by expert observers. We find, as regards (a) *the original relations of the two classes*, that the land is brought under cultivation by the joint action of the rayat and the village "saukar" or money-lender.

The established custom is that the saukar provides the seed-corn, and feeds the rayat and his family until the crop is ripe; making also cash advances to pay revenue instalments, buy bullocks, dig wells, and so forth. At harvest time a settlement is made, and the saukar receives a portion of the crop by way of payment for capital and interest. When, therefore, things work smoothly, the condition of the two classes may be regarded as a partnership founded on equity and mutual advantage; each taking a share of the crop which is produced by the industry of the one and the self-restraint of the other. To quote the words of Sir George Wingate, the father of the Bombay Revenue system, "the village money-lender and the rayat worked together in harmony, and both alike shared prosperity and adversity together." That this is the rayat's view of the natural order of things is amply shown by the evidence taken before the Commission. Thus one witness describes how he appealed for mercy to his creditor on the ground of this natural tie, and besought him saying: "You are my mother and I am your son." And in truth the parable is not inapt. For the saukar's advances are to the rayat as mother's milk. He cannot live without them. And all that he asks is to be treated with parental kindness and forbearance. This view, which recognises the mutual dependence of the two classes, and regards conciliation as the only hope of future prosperity, was urged by Mr. Shambhuprasad, a very experienced Native member of the Commission, who summarised his conclusions as follows:

> The rayats cannot do without the saukars, they must have some people to borrow from, and Government cannot undertake the business of the saukars. No measures should, therefore, be taken that may disturb the amicable relation between the saukars and the rayats.

And the same view was strongly insisted on by the speakers in the great debate in the Viceroy's Council at Simla in 1879, on the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act; Sir John Strachey pointing out that "money-lenders are obviously as necessary to the Indian agriculturist as the seed which he sows, or as the rain which falls from heaven to water his fields."

Such being the natural friendly relations between the rayat and the village money-lender, we have next to enquire (*b*) *how those relations were broken up, and a condition of the bitterest antagonism produced.* The answer is perfectly simple. The change was produced by the introduction of our debt-courts on the European model, which made the money-lender absolute master of the situation, arming him with the whole power of the Empire in the recovery of his debts. Under the easy-going Native *regime*, which exercised little coercion in such matters, the creditor had to cultivate the goodwill of his debtor, and to rely upon the local public opinion as regards the justice of his demand. He was one among many, and could not afford to outrage the general sentiment of the village in which he dwelt. Although, therefore, the nominal rate of interest was high, being equivalent to 12, 24, and 36 per cent. per annum, according to the rayat's credit, the actual recovery depended very much upon the result of the harvest, and the rayat's ability to pay. An appeal to the authorities practically referred him back to local public opinion. For among the Mahrattas the Panchayat or Court of Arbitration was the main instrument for the administration of justice, and it was only in extreme cases that the creditor could reckon upon the coercive help of a decree from a stipendiary judge. But all this was changed by the intro-

duction of our debt-courts, governed by technical rules of procedure,—rigid, merciless, and irresistible. The high nominal rates of interest became a terrible reality when embodied in a mortgage bond. And armed with a decree for foreclosure and sale, the creditor could either evict the rayat from his ancestral acres, or keep him on the land as a tenant-at-will on a rack-rent, reducing him to the lowest depths of serfdom. The angry despair which fills the hearts of the whole peasantry has from time to time shown itself in agrarian outbreaks, but none the less destructive are the results where the struggle goes on silently, oppression on one side, with evasion and fraud on the other. Volumes of reports have been filled with the tale of the rayat's woes, brought about by our imprudent and revolutionary changes, which have upset and broken up the whole framework of the rural economy. But the fruits of our innovation cannot be better described than in the words of Sir George Wingate :—

> This miserable struggle between debtor and creditor is thoroughly debasing to both. The creditor is made by it a grasping hard-hearted oppressor; the debtor a crouching false-hearted slave. It is disheartening to contemplate, and yet it would be weakness to conceal the fact that this antagonism of classes and degradation of the people, which is fast spreading over the land, is the work of our laws and our rule.

If such be the results of antagonism why not try conciliation? Why not revert to the method which produced "mutual confidence and mutual good will"? And this brings us to our last proposition. (*c*) *that relief may be obtained by the revival and scientific development of the old system of conciliation and arbitration by means of "Panchayats" or Village Councils.* Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone, the most distinguished Governor which Bombay ever possessed, was very strongly in favour of the Panchayat system, and bears testimony to its popularity,

quoting in proof the current phrase "Panch Parameswara,' an Eastern rendering of the maxim *Vox populi, vox Dei.* In another place he says:—" Too much pains cannot be taken to encourage private arbitration." And in his celebrated report on the Deccan he has given a full description of its excellent working under Ram Shastri and the great Minister Nana Farnavis, together with his own views as to its continuance under British rule. Sir Thomas Munro, Sir John Malcolm, and other eminent statesmen of a past generation shared in this view, and expressed opinions strongly in favour of reviving this national institution. Indian public opinion at the present day is solid in the same direction. When I was in India this feeling took a very practical shape in the Bombay Presidency. For the people of their own accord set up voluntary arbitration tribunals under the name of "Lawad" Courts, as a means of avoiding the mischiefs arising out of litigation. The following extract from a Native paper gives a brief account of what was done:—

The movement for the establishment of private Arbitration Courts commenced about two years ago in the small Talooka town of Indapur in the Poona District. The want of such Courts was so generally felt and the existing law was so favourable to their establishment that in two years private Arbitration Courts have been established in the Zilla towns of Poona, Sattara, Sholapur, Ahmednagar, Tanna, Ratnagiri, Nasick, Ahmedabad; and in the Poona, Sholapur, Sattara, and Tanna Districts, branch Courts have been established in the Talooka towns of Indapur, Supe, Karmale, Saswad, Talegaum, Kheda, Junnar, Kerjut, Kalian, and Wai. The Poona Arbitration Court commenced its work in January, 1876. At a public meeting of the inhabitants of Poona, a Committee of eighty-two gentlemen, representing all classes of the population, was appointed as a board of judges. Private suitors are allowed to choose any one or more out of this number to arbitrate upon matters referred to them. The Arbitrators sit by rotation, and get no remuneration for their voluntary labours. Nearly 3,000 suits during the last two years have been disposed of by private settlement in the Poona Arbitration Court.

This public-spirited and patriotic movement interested

me much. As a District Judge in the Deccan I had painful experience of the evils attaching to the existing system, and I was anxious to secure regularity and permanence to these voluntary arbitration tribunals, by bringing them into our judicial system. Accordingly, in consultation with experienced friends, I worked out a scheme to effect this purpose. The position was as follows: side by side there existed at this time two methods of settling disputes, one by conciliation, that is by friendly Panchayat; the other by antagonism, that is by hostile suit in court. Each had its merits and the idea was to combine the merits of both. On the one hand we had a strong staff of Native Subordinate Judges, trustworthy and highly trained, and accustomed to punctual discharge of business, but who, from their English education and isolated position found it difficult to learn the real merits of each case, and were often imperfectly informed regarding the condition and feelings of the people. Also in hearing cases they were cramped by the technicalities regarding evidence and procedure. On the other hand, we had the local Panchayats, capable of thoroughly ascertaining the facts of each case, their defects being dilatoriness, with the possibility of being swayed by feelings of partiality. The proposal was to combine the two, and obtain the excellences of both; the exact information of the Panchayat, controlled by the business habits and impartiality of the Judge. The plan for carrying out this object was based upon the old Mahratta system, according to which a dispute never came before a Judge until every form of Panchayat had been tried and had failed. I proposed that each large village or group of smaller villages should have its recognised Panchayat, the list of members being approved and published by the Government, and that

before this Judicial Committee of the Village Council all claims for small debts should in the first instance be brought. As many cases as possible would be disposed of amicably, the remainder being reserved till the Subordinate Judge, coming periodically on tour, arrived at the village, when he would sit as "Sir-Panch" or President of the Panchayat, and with their assistance dispose finally of all disputed points. As the members of the Panchayat ask for no remuneration, no fee would be charged on cases settled amicably, or at most something trifling to cover petty contingencies. The usual Court fee would be charged if either of the parties invoked the aid of the Subordinate Judge, whether in the decision or in the execution of the award. This payment would discourage frivolous objections to the award of the Panchayat, but would not deter a plaintiff or defendant from reserving his case if he had reasonable ground to fear injustice on account of local feelings of enmity or partiality. In no case should an appeal be allowed, for in these small debt suits a point of law rarely occurs, and when it does the Subordinate Judge is quite competent to deal with it. To guard against anything like a series of mistaken judgments we might trust to the supervision of the District Judge and his Assistants, who would travel about, questioning the people and hearing their complaints, inspecting the records, supervising and encouraging the Pancháyats, and using their influence to heal village feuds and maintain friendly relations among all classes. A system of this sort was recommended in the Deccan Riots Reports, and resembles the plan allowed by the Madras Regulation on Arbitation which was, I believe, drafted under the instructions of Sir Thomas Munro.

The next step was to obtain the opinion of practical men, both those who have to administer the law, and also

the classes specially interested. Accordingly a Bill was framed, and submitted to a large and representative public meeting in the Town Hall at Poona on the 4th of May, 1879. The general principles were approved, and the Bill was referred to an influential Select Committee chosen by the meeting. This Committee consisted of seven Subordinate Judges, two retired Subordinate Judges, two retired Revenue Officers, three Pleaders, two Bankers, and one Editor; all practical men deeply interested in the welfare of the rural population. I have now before me their report, which was adopted unanimously, together with the Bill as amended. The preamble runs as follows:—

> Whereas with a view to bring about conciliation and promote friendly feelings between the money-lenders and agricultural classes, and to diminish the expenses of litigation and to render the principle and more intelligent and respectable inhabitants useful by employing them in administering justice to their neighbours, it is desirable that suits against agriculturists should be disposed of by Panchayats, it is enacted as follows.

And to this preamble there followed the twenty clauses of the Bill providing in detail for the requirements of the case. In accordance with the request of the Committee I forwarded this draft Bill for the favourable consideration of Government.

It is recorded of William the Silent that:—

> He would do and ordain nothing except by the advice of the estates, by reason that they were best acquainted with the circumstances and humours of the inhabitants.

Unfortunately our Indian Government follows other and less wise counsels than those of the great Stadholder. So this practical scheme for the benefit of the rayats came to nought. The popular movement was discountenanced by the authorities; the stamp duty upon Arbitration Awards was increased; and each of the Subordinate Judges who had taken part in the scheme was separately reprimanded. I give this as another instance of grievous mischief caused to the rayat by Government measures, and of the refusal of the Government either itself to remedy the evil, or to allow others to do so.

A MAGNANIMOUS INDIAN PRINCE.

THE THAKORE SAHEB OF GONDAL.

I should like to call particular attention to a very interesting ceremony which recently took place at Gondal in Kathiawar; I mean the opening by his Excellency the Governor of Bombay of the Girasia College which has been founded and endowed by his Highness the Thakore Saheb of Gondal. The special objects of the institution were explained as follows by his Highness when addressing Lord Sandhurst, and asking him to declare the College open.

This College (he said) is specially founded for the sons of the landholding class called "Girasias," who derive that name from the Sanskrit word "Gras," signifying a morsel, that is to say a small share of the produce of the country these landowners claim. These people formerly played a very important and honourable part in the administration of the country. They were noted for their mental culture no less than for their muscular strength. Their successors, however, have undergone, sad to say, a complete transformation. By a combination of circumstances they have deteriorated in every respect. A false notion of family pride has led them to be extravagant when they ought to be frugal and judicious in the use of their money, especially when the landed possessions originally inherited have been subjected by a cruel process of divisions and sub-divisions in most cases to a ruinous extent. Thus reduced to want, they often become a prey to fraudulent money-lenders, and a total neglect of education renders them incapable of defending themselves against these usurers and other artful deceivers. It is a sad spectacle to see that while other communities are prospering, this important, and once chivalrous, class is evidently retrograding. Too proud to send their sons to the ordinary schools and too poor to send them to any of the special institutions established in the province for the aristocracy, they let them remain in gross ignorance. An eastern proverb calls ignorance a perpetual childhood. The first step, therefore, towards rescuing them from this state of things is, in my opinion, to throw open to them the flood-gates of education.

The experiment is a most interesting one. But in order to realise the importance of this new educational departure, and in order properly to appreciate the magnanimity

of the young prince in his present enterprise, it is necessary briefly to consider the origin and history of these Girasias and to understand the traditional antagonism which for generations has existed between them and the ruling chiefs.

Only those who have studied the past and present history of Kathiawar can realise the complexity, and also the interest, of the questions suggested by the terms, "Talukdar," "Gras," "Mulkgiri Army," "Walker's Settlement," "Bahviwatia," and "Rajasthanik Court." But I will try to give an idea of the political condition of the province before and after 1807, the date on which the British power first intervened, and established the *Pax Britannica* under the conditions of Walker's Settlement. Historical analogies are apt to be misleading, but it may be said in a general way that the condition of Kathiawar at the beginning of this century was, on a small scale, not unlike that of Europe in the Middle Ages, each State struggling with its neighbours for sovereignty, or independence, or existence. Then again, as the Capetian kings were in continual conflict with their great feudatories of Normandy, Brittany, or Aquitaine, so also the "Talukdars," or reigning chiefs, in Kathiawar had hard work to maintain order and subordination among their Girasias, whose position was in many respects analogous to that of feudal vassals. Thus it happened that up to 1807 the political condition of the province, torn and divided among contending tribes and races, was almost as unstable as a troublous sea, tossed by winds and waves; the fortunes of war deciding for each clan leader, or military adventurer, whether he was to succeed in establishing a reigning dynasty and take tribute from his neighbours, or whether he was to pay tribute to one stronger than he, or perhaps

sink into the position of a Girasia as the vassal of his conqueror. To crown the confusion an over-lordship was claimed by the great Mahratta States of the Peishwa and the Gaekwar, together with an undefined amount of tribute from each State; and to collect this tribute each year a large force, known as the Mulkgiri Army, invaded the province at harvest time, ravaging the crops, in default of payment, and burning the villages. Then, for the moment, the internal feuds were stayed, and each State stood on the defensive against the common enemy. They did not act together, but each chief, as a point of honour, refused to pay; and by way of protest stood a siege behind the ramparts of his capital, until the point of honour was satisfied by clear proof of *force majeure*. As soon as this foreign invading force had retired for the year the internal feuds were resumed with fresh energy.

This was the state of turmoil which was ended once and for all in 1807 by Walker's Settlement. In that year the forces of the Company and of the Gaekwar advanced into Kathiawar, and through the mediation of Colonel Walker the chiefs were induced to enter into engagements, under which they bound themselves to pay a certain fixed tribute; to keep the peace towards each other; and to maintain order within their own limits. In return they were secured from the visitations of the Mulkgiri Army, the British Government undertaking the work of collecting the tribute. In this way the unstable political condition of Kathiawar became stable; a perpetual *Treuga Dei*, enforced by irresistible power, giving permanency to the relations existing at the time when the engagements were made. It was as though the waves of a stormy polar sea had, by a sudden frost, been crystallised into mountains and valleys, permanent and immoveable.

Nothing could have been better for the 187 Talukdars, great and small, who happened then to be on the crest of the wave. But imagine the position and feelings of the chivalrous and warlike Rajput Girasia, who had himself been an independent Talukdar the year before, who hoped next year, by a successful revolt, to reassert his independence, and afterwards perhaps to carve out for himself a sovereignty at the expense of his neighbours! His occupation and all his future hopes were now gone. Evidently there were here elements of grave disturbance; for it was admitted that the Girasia occupied a political position different from the ordinary subjects of the State, the cultivators and traders; and in the matter of his "Gras" or feudal holding he refused to acknowledge as final the jurisdiction of his Talukdar, whom he regarded as his adversary, directly interested in depriving him of his rights. Accordingly when a Girasia considered himself wronged by the decision of his chief, he reasserted his ancient right of private warfare, and went out as a "Bahviwatia," that is, an outlaw, retiring with his followers into the wilds, whence he struck at his adversary's richest villages, carrying off the plunder to inaccessible jungles where he could defy pursuit.

Here was a fresh difficulty for the paramount power. Having accepted responsibility for the general peace of the province, it could not allow the continuance of this open disorder, whether regarded as brigandage or as civil war. But in dealing with a Bahviwatia how was the British Government to know whether or not he had a real grievance? Circumstances thus placed our Government in a dilemma. If, on the one hand, it granted a judicial appeal to itself from the decisions of the Talukdar, it hereby undermined his authority, and prevented the

orderly consolidation of his State; if, on the other hand, it sought to suppress the revolt without full enquiry, it might be abetting a gross injustice, and placing itself in antagonism with the sense of right throughout the province. In this dilemma our Government adopted a middle course, and sought to deal with these Girasia complaints as "political" cases, that is, by diplomatic methods; by making informal enquiry, and tendering authoritative advice to both parties, advising the chief to reconsider any decision that seemed unsatisfactory, and warning the Girasia to refrain from taking the law into his own hands. This method had its merits, especially when worked by such a kindly and experienced officer as Colonel Lang, who for many years held the office of Political Agent in Kathiawar. But it had this one great disadvantage that there was practically no finality; cases were referred backwards and forwards, and dragged on for years, and decades of years; the authority of the chiefs suffered; while the whole year round the aggrieved Girasias followed Colonel Lang's camp in crowds wherever he went, complaining that no redress was given to them. A considerable number also, weary of waiting, went out as Bahviwatias, and offered a fierce and sometimes successful resistance to the troops sent against them.

This sort of thing continued to go on for more than half a century; but at last it became intolerable, and eventually in 1873 the Rajasthanik Court was established, with practically the consent of all concerned, in order to deal with the difficulty. To this Court was granted, on behalf of all the chiefs, jurisdiction in Girasia cases over the whole province. It was composed of delegates from the leading States, and was presided over by a British officer appointed and paid by the chiefs; and the general

principle upon which it was constituted was, that it preserved the jurisdiction and authority of the States, while removing the complaint that the individual chief was sole judge in his own cause. During a period of years this Court has carefully enquired into the matters in dispute between chiefs and their Girasias, and has as far as possible removed the causes of future disagreements by surveying and mapping out each Girasia's estate, and by making a detailed register of both his rights and obligations. At the same time vigorous police measures have been taken against the outlaws, who have no longer an excuse for their outrages; so that now peace reigns throughout the province.

But the peace which has brought prosperity to the rest of the community has brought something like ruin to the proud and warlike Girasias, depriving them of their occupation and career. By the process of Hindu law their ancestral estates have become subdivided, so that they have been reduced to poverty, and have fallen into the hands of the money-lenders, while for want of education they have no means of restoring their fallen fortunes. Truly their case is a pitiable one; and all those who know Kathiawar must rejoice that the young chief has taken pity on them, exercising a noble revenge for past animosities by now helping them to better things.

In doing this he puts aside all mean fears, and shows a bright example of confidence in the saving efficacy of education. Poor, feeble, doubting Thomases, who tremble lest education should undermine our Empire, will do well to ponder the words he addressed to the Governor. Some, he said:

express a fear that as the Girasias are generally at variance with the Durbar, and as there is a real or supposed gulf of ill-feeling

between them, it is not a prudent policy on our part to open their eyes by tearing away the bandage which darkens their intellectual vision. I consider these fears to be entirely groundless. For I have implicit faith in the exalting influences of education, which seldom fail to ennoble and humanise the instincts. The goodness of a good cause must assert itself soon or late, and my own belief is that a cultured and well-informed mind will surely overcome wrong prejudices and see things in their true and proper light. It makes its possessor a loyal and useful citizen.

To these expressions Lord Sandhurst responded in the most cordial terms; and at the same time his Excellency paid a just tribute to the Chief's admirable administration, in the labours of which her Highness the Maharani takes a willing part.

This (he said) is a State which, I consider, demands much careful study. It presents, perhaps, the sole example of a chief who, with his wife, ministers daily to the requirements of his people, who are both accessible to the complaints of their people, and who both make the needs of their people their greatest care. His Highness conducts his official and his private life upon what we consider to be the best European lines. It is not too much to say that his Highness's State is admirably administered.

When pondering on this scene of friendly and fruitful co-operation of East and West, certain questions suggest themselves: Why should not our Districts be as prosperous and contented as a well-ordered Native State? And, why should there be estrangement and distrust between the two great branches of the Aryan race? Their origin is the same; after long separation history has reunited them; their interests are identical; each can supplement the other; combined they represent qualities and resources which may be made all-powerful in the world for good.—*India*, January 20, 1899.

ADVANCE, BARODA!

Recently H. H. the Maharaja of Baroda has sanctioned a very interesting experiment for the relief of the backward classes in his dominions. The Regulation in question was recommended by Mr. V. M. Samarth, Sar Subha, or Chief Revenue Commissioner, of the Baroda State ; and is entitled, " Rules for taking payment in kind from the 'Kali Paraj' (that is, the backward classes, such as Bhils and Kolis), of the Rani Mahals." By way of preamble the Regulation sets forth that these classes, being ignorant and illiterate, experience difficulty, and suffer great loss, in procuring the cash wherewith to pay the Government dues ; and it has therefore been held expedient to give them the option of paying these dues in the form of grain and other produce. The terms offered are of the most indulgent kind, for every form of Government claim may thus be dealt with, whether current or arrear, whether paid wholly or in part ; also a wide limit is allowed as regards the nature of the produce received ; rice, millet, wheat, pulses, seeds, etc., being all accepted in payment of the Government demand.

To show the practical nature of the scheme, I will briefly describe the process by which the commutation price is fixed, the produce collected from the cultivators, and the cash realised by the Treasury. But before doing so, it will be well to indicate more specifically the nature of the " difficulty " and " loss " to which the cultivator is now subjected, inasmuch as the existing system drives him to the money-lender in order to get the cash necessary to pay the Government dues, punctually, on a fixed day. As

every one knows, the original foundation of the Government land revenue is the claim of the ruler to receive from the cultivator a certain share of the gross produce of every field. Upon this point the ordinance of Manu is as follows: "The land revenue consists of a share of grain and of all other agricultural produce. Of grain $\frac{1}{12}$th, $\frac{1}{8}$th or $\frac{1}{6}$th, according to the soil and the labour necessary to cultivate it." This "Batai," or payment in kind, enjoined by the religious laws, and approved by immemorial custom, possessed great merit. In the first place, it acted automatically as a sliding scale of charge. When the harvest was abundant the cultivator, without grudging, gave the ruler a big contribution; if the crop was deficient, he gave little; if there was a failure, he gave nothing at all. The system had also the great merit that the cultivator was not driven to the money-lender for cash. When the crop was ripe, the ruler simply took his share, and the cultivator with his family lived on the remainder. On the other hand, the system was undoubtedly liable in practice to serious abuses. Under the older administrations the Government share of produce was usually assigned to some subordinate authority; and as the amount to be levied was not fixed, and as the subordinate authority himself exercised locally all the powers of the State, it is evident that there was great room for tyranny and extortion. In order to put a stop to these abuses, our Government decided that, instead of a fluctuating amount in kind, they would take a fixed sum in cash, to be paid punctually, on fixed dates, whatever might be the result of the harvest. This was done with the best intentions. But, in making this revolutionary change, sufficient consideration was not given to the following points: 1st, That the charge abolished the automatic sliding scale which, from time immemorial

had been a protection to the cultivator in times of distress; 2nd, That the necessity for punctual cash payment drove all the villagers to the money-lender on the same day, thus tightening the local money market to an excessive degree, and placing the cultivator at the mercy of the usurer; and, 3rd, That, by a stroke of the pen, the Government had transferred to the weak shoulders of the peasant cultivator the burden of encashing the public land revenue, a duty clearly belonging to the central Government. In other words, the Government compelled the peasant to guarantee the public against loss, and to carry out a great financial operation for which he was absolutely unfitted. Such is, in brief, the history of the present position. The result of this well-intentioned fiscal revolution has been to plunge the cultivator into hopeless indebtedness. He has thus become absolutely destitute, and, what is worse still, his credit has been destroyed. As he never can pay the money he already owes, why should the money-lender make him any fresh advances in times of famine? If, therefore, a single harvest fails, he must now die of starvation, unless fed by the State. This is the secret of famine mortality, especially among the backward tribes, such as the Bhils and Kolis, for whose benefit the present benevolent scheme is specially intended.

Let us now return to the particulars of the scheme itself, and see how the commutation rate is fixed, the produce collected, and the cash realised. In order to settle various commutation prices, the district is divided into groups of villages, regard being had to their position, their distance from a market, and their similarity in respect of staple articles of food, and also as to weights and measures. Calculations of price are then made, and a comparative statement is drawn up showing, for each group of villages,

the difference between the current prices of the year, and the average prices which have prevailed during the last five years. If the difference does not exceed $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., the average of the last five years is accepted as the rate at which the various grains will be received in payment for the year. If the difference exceeds $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. the Chief Commissioner himself deals with the matter as a special case. The prices thus determined are notified, not later than October 15, both at the central station and in the villages concerned.

The business of collecting the produce, and realising the cash, is done through "Ijardars" or contractors, approved by the Government, in the following manner: In the month of November, not less than 25 days before the first instalment is due from cultivator, the District Officer issues a notification, giving full particulars as regards each group of villages, showing the dates of collection, the amounts to be received, the measures, prices, etc.; and in accordance with this notification he sells by auction, to the highest bidder, the right to receive the Government share in each village, in a group of villages, or in the whole district. On the appointed day, the contractor, who has been successful at the auction, proceeds to the village, and in the presence of the village officers takes over the produce due from each cultivator, after it has been duly weighed or measured; but he is not allowed to remove it until he has paid to the village officers the cash in accordance with his contract. A careful check is maintained by a system of registers and receipts, which are ultimately compared and verified by the central office. Any disputes that may arise between the contractor and the cultivator are settled on the spot by the District Officer, with the help of local "Panches," or assessors.

It will thus be seen that in several important particulars the Baroda scheme reverts to the ancient customary method, understood by the people, and suited to their habits. Instead of forcing the peasant cultivator to go to the capitalists for cash to pay the revenue, the Government deals with the capitalist at first hand; and, instead of making the cultivator bear the chances of the seasons, the Government, on behalf of the whole community, takes this risk upon itself. This is as it should be. And taking one locality with another, and one season with another, the difference to the public treasury is trifling; while the relief to the cultivator makes the difference between safety and ruin. As a matter of account, even, the inconvenience is not great: when the amount realised from the contractor falls short of the assessment, the deficit is written off as "remission"; if it exceeds the assessment, the surplus is shown as profit on the sale; and these two sets of items balance each other in the long run. It is to be noted that the cultivator is at all times at liberty to pay his assessment in cash if he prefers to do so.

It is now nearly 30 years ago that Sir James Caird, as a Famine Commissioner, proposed that a similar experiment of taking payment in kind should be made in our own districts; but although he spoke with unrivalled authority on all matters relating to land, his proposal passed unheeded. And, in recent years, similar suggestions from the Indian Famine Union met with a somewhat ungracious refusal. It has been left to the wisdom and humanity of an Indian Prince to initiate the experiment. Will our administrators be wise and humane enough to follow his lead? The position gives food for reflection. At present, it is the practice for our Government to bring severe pressure to bear upon Indian Princes until, often

against their better judgment, they adopt our centralised official system of departmental administration. According to independent Indian opinion, the result has been to sap and undermine local initiative and prosperity. We should do much more wisely if, instead of forcing our sterilising uniformity upon the Native States, we profited by their example, and learned to study more carefully the special needs and wishes of the people for whose welfare we are responsible.—*India*, February 10, 1905.

PERIODICAL PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY.

At the ballot for precedence on the discussion of the Indian Budget Mr. Cathcart Wason obtained first place, and gave notice of a motion asking for fuller opportunities for Parliamentary discussion of Indian affairs. An important point in this motion is the demand for the revival of the searching Parliamentary enquiries which, in the time of the old East India Company, were held, at intervals of 20 years, into the whole administration of India, before the renewal of the Company's Charter. It seems, therefore, opportune briefly to recall the circumstances under which each of these enquiries was held ; and to note the results obtained. The most important dates in this connection are 1773, 1793, 1833, and 1853.

The first occasion on which Parliament interfered actively in the affairs of the East India Company was in 1773 when, under Lord North's administration, the Regulating Act was passed, and an attempt was made to place a

control on the Government in Calcutta. The experiment was not a success; and in 1782 and 1783 two Committees of the House of Commons were appointed, one presided over by Mr. Edmund Burke, and the other by Mr. Dundas; and these two Committees made not less than 17 Reports, all condemnatory of the Company's Government. Upon these Reports the House of Commons passed resolutions for the immediate dismissal of the Governor-General and the Chief Justice of Bengal; the situation being thus described by the Rt. Hon. W. Massey in his History of England under George III: —

> The Company lay under accusation of having cruelly and scandalously abused the privileges of rulers. Their principal servants had been inculpated of gross malversation by a unanimous resolution of the House of Commons; and the Company had nevertheless upheld their officers in spite of the opinion of Parliament and of the Ministers of the Crown. . . . . . Nor had the Company purchased material prosperity by the open violation of the principles on which civil government, nay, society itself, is based. Plunder and extortion had only relieved their immediate and temporary exigencies. The ordinary resources of India were unequal to satisfy the greedy adventurers who were spread over the land, and to maintain the military force which was necessary to support an arbitrary and iniquitous Government. The Company, therefore, came before Parliament as delinquents who had grossly abused their trust, and as bankrupts who were unable to perform their engagements.

Such being the condition of affairs, India formed the most prominent topic in the King's Speech on opening the autumnal Session of 1783; and a few days later Mr. Fox introduced his famous India Bill, to suspend the powers of the Company, and to bring the affairs of India under constitutional control. In 1784 this Bill "for the better Government of India" was passed through the House of Commons by a majority of more than two to one in every division. And if it had become law, a strong and independent Parliamentary control would have been established over the Executive in India. Unhappily, the progress of

the reformers was stopped by the fall of the Coalition Ministry; and the task of putting a bit and a bridle in the mouth of the great Indian bureaucracy remains unfulfilled to the present day.

Mr. Pitt, who next came into power, passed his India Bill, which established the Board of Control, the President of the Board being a Minister of the Crown. He thus provided for systematic interference in the affairs of the Company; and in 1793, Mr. Dundas, then President of the Board of Control, took advantage of the renewal of the Company's Charter, for a period of 20 years, to consolidate all the existing enactments, thus completing the fabric of the dual Government by the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, which lasted some 60 years from this date.

A similar Parliamentary enquiry was held before the renewal of the Charter in 1813, the result of which was that the commercial monopoly which the East India Company enjoyed with regard to India and China, was abolished.

Again, in 1833, when the Charter was renewed, the memorable Act was passed by which it was declared that Natives of India, without regard to colour, descent, or religion, should be eligible to every office under the Government which their education and acquirements might qualify them to fill.

Finally, there was the enquiry which preceded the renewal of the Charter in 1853; an enquiry which led to many beneficial reforms, including the abolition of patronage in the Indian Civil Service, the appointments being thrown open to public competition.

From the above meagre summary we can see the immense benefit that India derived from such periodical

Parliamentary enquiries; the object of these enquiries being, first, to ascertain the facts as to the condition, the wants, and the aspirations of the people; and, secondly, to decide how those wants and aspirations can best be met, with benefit to all concerned. Experience shows that in each period of 20 years fresh conditions had arisen, and material alterations became necessary both in the framework of the Government machine and in modes of administration, in order to meet the social and political developments of the people. But this development and progress has been much more rapid during the half century which has elapsed since the enquiry of 1853. What has been done since then to realise the situation; to provide redress of grievances; to control the official autocracy; and to satisfy the natural aspirations of the people for Self-Government, stimulated as it has been by the education and the contact of Western nations? Much was hoped for in 1858, when the old East India Company was disestablished, and the direct administration was assumed by the Crown. But what has been the practical result? The theory, of course, is that the Secretary of State for India is responsible to, and subordinate to, Parliament, and that in dealing with Indian complaints he occupies a position of judicial impartiality. But this is altogether a delusion. The Secretary of State for India, being backed by the Ministerial majority, is in Indian matters, practically the master, not the servant, of the House of Commons; and, so far from being an impartial judge, ready to hear complaints, and eager to afford redress, he is in reality the mouthpiece and champion of the official hierarchy, against whom the complaints are made. Deriving his views and information solely from the India Office, he becomes naturally the apologist of all official acts, and resents every complaint as a reflection on

the administration of which he is himself the head. So far from things being better now than they were before 1858, they are distinctly worse; and especially in two particulars: In those days India was administered in the name of the East India Company, and there existed a wholesome jealousy, both in the House of Commons and in the country, of a chartered monopoly. That wholesome jealousy has been lulled to sleep since the Crown has openly assumed the administration. The other great benefit that India then enjoyed, and has now lost, was the full and impartial enquiry before each renewal of the Company's Charter. Out of those enquiries arose, as we have seen, all the most useful and progressive reforms by which England has benefitted India. Also, the Company used to put its house in order, and redressed grievances, when these enquiries were in sight. Now all these benefits are lost. Since 1856 there has been no such enquiry; no day of reckoning for the Indian administration; and the Indian people are quite powerless to obtain that thorough and independent investigation into facts which used to come to them automatically, and without effort, once every 20 years. So far from being controlled, the Indian Bureaucracy is always becoming stronger, more reactionary, and more aggressive; fortifying itself in the great centralised departments, and grasping the legislative machinery, which it employs to undermine local Self-Government, to suppress free speech, and to paralyse higher education. Instead of emphasising the difference between British and Russian rule, and developing those free institutions which form the main ground of Indian attachment to England, these blind guides are setting up in India a feeble and foolish imitation of Russian despotism, and are rapidly alienating the affections of a loyal, intelligent, and law-abiding people.

Anyone who peruses the earlier debates in Parliament with regard to the constitutional changes in the Indian Government, will notice the anxious desire of the speakers that due weight should be given to Indian opinion and Indian knowledge. But the difficulty in those early days was to get hold of any authorised and organised Indian public opinion. Now, however, that difficulty no longer exists. Since 1856 several generations of educated men have come forward, trained in our colleges and universities; men who have attained the highest distinction in administration, on the Bench, at the Bar, in science, and all the liberal professions. With such spokesmen India is no longer inarticulate. Nor is Indian public opinion any longer without effective organisation. For the Indian National Congress, freely elected in all the Provinces of India, has now met year after year, for the last 20 years, to voice the needs, the wishes, and the aspirations of the Indian people; and the resolutions, moderate and reasonable, are year by year respectfully submitted for the consideration of the Indian Government. Rightly understood, the interests of India and England are identical, and the cordial co-operation of the educated classes is the most hopeful sign for our successful administration in the future. As a preliminary step towards utilising this source of knowledge and influence, an experienced Indian administrator should be added to the Executive Council of the Viceroy, and several independent representative Indians should be invited to sit on the Council of the Secretary of State for India.

At present the Indian Government refuses enquiry into the condition of the Indian rural population, which suffers from famine and plague; and a deaf ear is turned to the memorials of the National Congress, asking for

reasonable measures which will improve the condition of the masses. Special Indian knowledge, such as Parliament does not possess, is needed to deal satisfactorily with these vexed questions. But the great merit of Mr. Wason's motion is, that what it asks for requires no expert knowledge to understand. It involves no concession or boon, regarding which there might be controversy, but only provides a means by which Parliament and the British electors would be enabled better to do their acknowledged duty, and fulfil their trust towards the unrepresented and helpless Indian people.—*India*, 23rd June, 1905.

THE SIMLA REFORM SCHEME.

In reviewing the "Circular, dated Simla, August 24, 1907," which has been issued as a White Paper, the "Manchester Guardian," a faithful friend of the Indian people, gives a timely warning against hasty condemnation: "It would be a great mistake to regard any of the Government's proposed reforms as the last word, or to criticise them as though they were a final settlement." This warning has been called for by the inclination of some journalists to treat the Simla Circular as Mr. Morley's final decision, whereas, as a matter of fact, Mr. Morley has as yet expressed no opinion regarding the scheme outlined. Also the Circular is not a decision at all. It is only a series of suggestions sent out by the Viceroy in Council in order to obtain an expression of opinion, both official and non-official. To quote the words of the Circular (para. 21)

"These are provisional and tentative proposals"; and the local authorities are instructed to consult with "important bodies and individuals representative of the various classes of the community," and to report not later than March 1, 1908. All that Mr. Morley has done by his telegram of August 23, is to approve the issue of the Viceroy's Circular. So far therefore from the Simla scheme being Mr. Morley's final decision, it is not final: and it is not a decision; and it is not Mr. Morley's.

I do not now propose to discuss the merits, or the demerits, of the scheme. There is time enough for that. What I wish to do is to advise as to procedure, having regard to the circumstances of the case. Now the first thing that strikes one, in considering the Circular, is the ample time and opportunity afforded to the Indian public to express their opinion. Hitherto the complaint has been that, of late years, measures vitally affecting public interests have been matured in silence and secrecy by the Government, and then sprung without warning upon the people of India. This method added bitterness to the partition of Bengal, a scheme which sprang, in full panoply, direct from Lord Curzon's pregnant brain. The present Circular marks a striking departure from this imperial and imperious practice. There is no secrecy. On the contrary, there appears even to be an absence of prudent reticence in the candour with which bureaucratic preferences are displayed, and electoral devices advocated for the discomfiture of political opponents. As there is no secrecy, so also there is no suddenness. From August 24, 1907, to March 1, 1908, there are six good months, before the local authorities report to the Government of India. Then the Government of India will need some time to digest the great mass of material before them, and to prepare a despatch

to the Secretary of State. This despatch will hardly reach London before May ; and the Parliamentary Session will be well advanced before the Secretary of State is prepared to announce his decision. What then is the procedure to be followed, if Indian reformers desire to make the most of their opportunity ? There are three stages in the proceedings : No. 1, which ends on March 1, 1908, with the reports of the local authorities ; No. 2, which ends with the despatch of the Viceroy in Council ; and No. 3, which ends with the decision of the Secretary of State. If legislation is required, there will be a further (Parliamentary) stage. In each of these stages there is special work to be done.

No. 1. *Before the Local Authorities.*—The first step is to organise combined and effective action on the part of the "important bodies and individuals representative of the various classes of the community," who are to be consulted by the local authorities. Local Committees should be formed, and public meetings held, to discuss the provisions of the Circular ; and afterwards a Provincial Conference should be arranged, to mature and focus local opinion, and to select the individuals best qualified to represent "the various classes of the community," and to lay before the authorities the views and wishes of the people.

No. 2. *Before the Government of India.*—Looking to the vital importance of the principles dealt with in the Circular, I think that the discussions at the next Session of the Indian National Congress should be devoted exclusively to the questions now raised by the Government of India. After formally confirming the existing Congress programme, a careful series of Resolutions should be passed, dealing with each important heading of the Sim

scheme; and these resolutions should be made the basis of monster petitions to the Viceroy, signed by the representatives of every class, caste, and creed throughout India. Upon the quality of these resolutions, and their general acceptance by all classes of the population, will depend the ultimate effect they will have in moulding the scheme into a shape which will satisfy the reasonable aspirations of the Indian people. The Congress should also appoint delegates authorised to present the resolutions to the Viceroy; and afterwards to form a deputation to England.

No. 3. *Before the Secretary of State and Parliament.*—During the past Session of Parliament the cause of India has greatly suffered, in two ways, for the want of accredited Indian representatives in England. The cause suffered as regards England, for want of missionary work; and, as regards India, in the matter of tactics and procedure. Throughout the current year Indian topics have been much to the front in England, both in Parliament and in the Press, and Indian representatives were sorely needed, to state their case at first hand to the Secretary of State; to keep their friends of the Indian Parliamentary Committee well posted as to the facts; and promptly to refute the mischievous allegations of the Yellow Press. The neglect of such work was deplorable. But equally to be deplored was the difficulty, as regards tactics and procedure, necessarily experienced by the leaders in India, owing to want of touch with the Parliamentary situation. Misunderstandings and cross purposes were unavoidable when the leaders, informing their judgment on Parliamentary peeches and complicated debates, had to depend upon the brief, and often cryptic, utterances of Reuter, and the glosses of the Anglo-Indian Press. Calm, well-directed, and consistent action in India was well nigh impossible under

these conditions, especially among a people driven almost to frenzy by ten years of imperialistic aggravations. Parliament has now risen; and the centre of activity will be in India until the Viceroy's report reaches Westminster. But after that, India must be held to have wilfully thrown away her chance if she does not send to London a well-chosen band of her best men, furnished with facts and arguments, and accredited by their fellow-countrymen; to make good her case before the Secretary of State, the Indian Parliamentary Committee, and the British public generally. It will be impossible to satisfy public opinion in England that the needs of India are real, unless her sons are prepared to make the necessary sacrifices in order to plead her cause at the seat of power.

Such generally is the procedure suggested by the terms of the Circular. But in order to avoid disaster, and to obtain the maximum of benefit, it is necessary carefully to keep in view the political situation in England, and, in asking for concessions, to choose the line of least resistance; cultivating and utilising the forces friendly to progress; but not under-estimating the power, both static and dynamic, of organised officialdom, which holds in its hands the instruments of administration, which has the sympathy of one of the great parties in the State, and which can reckon on the support of a wealthy and resourceful Press, especially in London. To be successful the tactics must be guided by prudence and common sense, discriminating intelligently between friend and opponent. We must not fall into the mistake of the child, which knocks its head against a stone wall, and then beats its nurse.

Now, in contemplating the political situation in England, it is evident that Mr. Morley is the central figure, so far as India is concerned. In his hands is concen-

trated the political power conferred on the present Government by the overwhelming vote of the electorate; his personality is great with the supporters of the Government; and his constitutional authority over the official Indian hierarchy is absolute. Further, as regards his principles, he is opposed to Imperialism; he is a lover of freedom; and he sympathises with national aspirations. All this the Indian public are well aware of. And they naturally ask, such being the power in his hands, and such being his principles and inclination, why has there not been a complete reversal of the previous policy? The ship was going straight upon the rocks. The new captain has come on board. Why has he not turned her round, and brought her into safe harbour? As the expectations were very high, so the disappointment has been very deep; and a cry has been raised that Mr. Morley has been captured by the enemy, that there is no hope from any party in England, and that the only remedy for India is active, or passive, resistance. As a consequence of this feeling the reforms foreshadowed by Mr. Morley have in some quarters been received with distrust, and even with contumely. Now, in my opinion, this view of the situation, however natural, is incorrect as regards the facts; also it is bad tactics, as tending to discourage Mr. Morley, and to weaken his hands. It is wiser to assume that his principles are unchanged, and that he is doing his best under difficult circumstances. Following up the analogy of the ship of State, we must remember that a great ironclad, with much way on, cannot be turned round within its own length by merely putting the helm up or down. Also the new captain has much to contend with. Practically alone in his conning-tower, with an unwilling crew, his task is a formidable one, navigating unknown seas among cross

currents and hidden rocks. We must not forget that, as regards Indian affairs the British public is both ignorant and timid ; and it is owing to the skill of Mr. Morley that an important move forward has been effected, without either an outcry in Parliament, or a scare in the Press.

My advice therefore to the Indian leaders is, to regard the concessions sketched in the Viceroy's Circular as the official minimum, the bedrock upon which to build ; to read carefully between the lines of Mr. Morley's speeches ; and upon the Simla foundation to construct a scheme, suited to Indian practical requirements while not incompatible with Mr. Morley's declarations. Within the scope of this Indian scheme I would also include the Rayal Commission on decentralisation, and the decision to appoint Indians to the Council of the Secretary of State. To illustrate my meaning I may refer to the Royal Commission, which has been appointed to alleviate the "great mischief of over-centralisation." Decentralisation may be effected by giving more unrestricted power to local autocrats, which would aggravate the mischief ; or it may be effected by a development of local self-government, a move in the right direction. There is every reason to suppose, from Mr. Morley's general principles, that his intention has been to favour the latter arrangement. Also the appointment as Chairman of Sir Henry Primrose who, as Private Secretary to Lord Ripon, is identified with the policy of local self-government, seems to point in the same direction. I think, therefore, that Indian leaders should lay before the Commissioners a scheme of decentralisation which will give the people a real voice in the management of their own affairs, and which will at the same time be safe, practical, and inexpensive. The princi-

ple of decentralisation might also be made applicable to the case of Bengal, if the old Province were reconstituted under a Governor-in-Council, Chief Commissioners being apppointed, with representative Councils, for Assam, Behar and perhaps Orissa.

Similarly as regards Indian members of the Secretary of State's Council. It is of the utmost importance that such members should be in touch with Indian public opinion, and that they should possess the full confidence of their fellow-countrymen. Support might, therefore, be given to the proposal in the Minority Report of Lord Welby's Commission, that such members should be nominated on the recommendation of the elected members of the Viceroy's and Local Legislative Councils.

So much with regard to what should be done. What should be left undone? In my opinion everything should be left undone which tends to discourage Mr. Morley, or weaken his hands, such as denunciation, and demands incompatible with the principles he has laid down for his guidance. I hold no brief for Mr. Morley, and if denunciation would help the cause of India, I should be as ready to speak faithfully to him, as in former days to Sir Henry Fowler, or Lord George Hamilton. But I do not think denunciation will now do any good, especially if based on imperfect knowledge of the true inwardness of things. In matters of constitutional reform we have to go step by step; and patience must be exercised. Of course, anything like disorder, however much provoked, is simply playing into the hands of opponents, and giving the hostile Press an excuse to accuse Indians of disloyalty, and to deny their capacity for self-government.—*India*, 20th September, 1907.

MR. MORLEY AND INDIAN REFORM.

I.

There appears to be some confusion in the public mind as regards the important constitutional reforms contemplated by Mr. Morley. In India, especially, the view taken is unduly pessimistic. No doubt there is reasonable ground for anxiety, and even alarm. For the scheme set forth in the Simla "Circular," of August 24 last, is, as regards some of its main features, directly contrary to the wishes and hopes of Indian reformers; so that some of them have given way to despair, condemning the whole scheme as worse than useless, and denying that it contains even the germs of anything good. They think that, under the guise of a Council of Notables, it is intended to create an Indian House of Lords; and, on the pretext of expansion, to eliminate from the Legislative Councils the elements of independence and progress. These suspicions are not ill-founded, so far as Simla is concerned. But where these Indian critics have fallen into error is when they have hastily assumed that Mr. Morley is committed to this scheme, and even that he is its originator. A consideration of the facts will show that this assumption is erroneous; that the scheme originated at Simla, and nowhere else; and that Mr. Morley maintains a judicial attitude towards it, keeping the ultimate decision in his own hands. A reference to the history of the case will show that the general principles laid down by Mr. Morley as regards the Council of Notables point less to a House of Lords than to the Indian National Congress, which for the last twenty years has sought to act as the interpreter between the rulers and the ruled; and that, as regards

the expansion of the Legislative Councils, he has said nothing incompatible with a development that would give a fair and full representation to all that is independent and progressive in the Indian community. To make the matter clearer, I propose briefly to show what reforms Mr. Morley originally "adumbrated," to use his own phrase; what Simla has suggested; and what may still be done to make the reforms acceptable to the Indian people.

A. Adumbration.—In his speech on the Indian Budget, on June 5, 1907, Mr. Morley adumbrated certain proposals for a move in advance, including (1) the establishment of a Council of Notables; and (2) the expansion of the Legislative Councils in India. With regard to the Council of Notables, he observed that in 1877 Lord Lytton set up a Council of this kind, but it was a complete failure. The Council now proposed "would have a much wider scope." It "would be called together from time to time for the double purpose of eliciting independent opinion and diffusing what is really the most important thing of all—correct information as to the actions and intentions of the Government." In other words, it was to act as an interpreter between the rulers and the ruled; and to have "a much wider scope" than an hereditary Chamber.

B. Suggestion.—Such being the general objects of Mr. Morley's proposed move forward, it was left to the Viceroy in Council to suggest a scheme by which these objects should be carried out. And in the "Circular" from Simla of August 24, 1907, a scheme is set forth in considerable detail. Instead of a single "Council of Notables," indicated by Mr. Morley, they propose an "Imperial Advisory Council" for the Viceroy, and a "Provincial Advisory Council" for each of the provincial

governments. This is clearly a move in the right direction. It is when the composition of these Councils comes in that Simla goes wrong. The Imperial Advisory Council, as proposed, is to consist of about sixty members, appointed by the Viceroy, including about twenty ruling chiefs and a certain number of territorial magnates. The suggested composition of the Provincial Advisory Councils is less definite; but the Imperial Councillors belonging to the Province are to form the nucleus of each Provincial Council, to whom are to be added representatives of "the smaller landholders, industry, commerce, capital, and the professional classes." Next as regards the expansion of the Legislative Councils. Briefly stated, the Imperial Legislative Council is to consist of fifty-four members, including the Viceroy.

They are made up as follows: Eight ex-officio members, including the Executive Council; twenty additional nominated officials; one ruling chief, nominated by the Viceroy, two members elected by the Chambers of Commerce of Calcutta and Bombay; seven elected by the non-official members of Provincial Legislative Councils; seven by nobles and great landowners; two by Mahomedans; four non-officials nominated by the Viceroy to represent minorities or special interests, not less than two to be Mahomedans; and two experts nominated by the Viceroy.

As regards the Provincial Legislative Councils, it is left to the local governments to determine how many seats are to be filled by elected representatives; and an elaborate system is suggested under which, in substitution of the existing simple franchise, the electoral power will be given, according to race, caste, and religion, to classes and groups formed at the discretion of the authorities. A consideration of these particulars fully justifies the misgivings of the reformers. The saving clause is that these proposals are declared to be "entirely provisional and suggestive." So there is still room for repentance.

C. Realisation.—Such being the adumbration of Mr. Morley, and such being the suggestion of Simla, how will the project of reform materialise? The process by which the ultimate decision will be reached has been clearly stated by Mr. Morley in his speech on Dr. Rutherford's amendment on the Address. That amendment condemned the "present proposals of the Government of India as being inadequate to allay the existing and growing discontent" in India; and Mr. Morley said :—

I will repeat what I said in the debate on the Indian Budget as to how the case stands. The Government of India sent over to the India Office their proposals—their various schemes for Advisory Councils, and so forth. We at the India Office subjected them to a careful scrutiny and laborious examination. As a result of this careful scrutiny and examination, they were sent back to the Government of India, with the request that they would submit them to discussion in various quarters. The instruction to the Government of India was that by the end of March the India Office was to hear what the general view was at which the Government of India had themselves arrived upon all these plans, complexities and important variations. We wanted to know what they would tell us. It will be for us to consider how far the report so arrived at, how far these proposals, ripened by Indian opinion, carried out the policy which His Majesty's Government had in view. Surely that is a reasonable and simple way of proceeding.

To me it appears most reasonable and simple. Mr. Morley has not expressed approval of any part or portion of the Simla scheme. What he did by his telegram of August 23, 1907, was to authorise the Government of India to consult local governments, and to invite public opinion on the whole subject; thus giving Indian reformers the opportunity not only of criticising the Simla proposals, but of submitting alternative proposals for carrying out the objects in view; and allowing them six good months to do this; the six months including the session of the Indian National Congress, which is always held at Christmas time. The final decision he reserved for himself. The test will be whether or not the proposals

carry out the policy of His Majesty's Government—that is, a policy of progressive and sympathetic reform. By this test proposals must stand or fall.

As regards the spirit in which this policy will be applied to India we have the declarations of Mr. Morley in 1906 in his speech on the Indian Budget. Speaking of the claims of Indian reformers, he said :—

I do not see or hear demands for violent or startling new departures. What I do see is a stage reached in the gradual and inevitable working out of Indian policy, which makes it wise and in the natural order of things that we should advance with a firm, courageous, and intrepid step, some paces further on the path of continuous, rational improvement in the Indian system of government. . . . You cannot go on narrowly on the old lines. We should be untrue to all the traditions of this Parliament, and to those who from time to time, and from generation to generation, have been the leaders of the Liberal Party, if we were to show ourselves afraid of facing and recognising the new spirit with candour and consideration.

And he added :—

I only want the House to know that we are in earnest in the direction I have indicated.

Now as to practical action. There is, I believe, a pithy Sanskrit saying, "Ta Ga," equivalent to our proverb that we should strike when the iron is hot; and I strongly urged my Indian friends that, at the Indian National Congress, they should concentrate themselves on this project of constitutional reform, focussing Indian public opinion: not only denouncing the defects of the Simla proposals, but submitting to the Viceroy, on behalf of the Congress, a well-considered scheme which would satisfy Mr. Morley's conditions, and be a real step in national progress. Such an authoritative representation could not have failed to influence the Government of India in making their further report to England, and it would have served as the basis of the pleadings when the case comes on for hearing and final decision in the court of the Secretary of State.

Unfortunately, such a course was not pursued. But this only makes it the more necessary that the case for the people of India should, during the next two months, be clearly and effectually placed before the Secretary of State, the two Houses of Parliament, and the British public. And for this purpose it is indispensable that India should send to England accredited representatives, men of weight and experience. English friends will, of course, do their best. And, so far as general principles are concerned, it will not be difficult to show that the Simla proposals, as they now stand, must fail when tried by the standard set up by Mr. Morley. Whereas he calls for progress, these proposals spell retrogression ; whereas he desires expansion, these proposals involve contraction ; whereas the forward movement, recognised and welcomed by Mr. Morley, is the work of the educated and independent classes, the effect of the proposals would be to exclude the "intellectuals" from the positions of public influence which they now occupy. These general considerations are self-evident. But, at the same time, it is absolutely essential that here, at the seat of power, the facts should be stated at first hand, and Indian feelings and aspirations effectually voiced by Indians trusted and duly accredited by their fellow countrymen.—*The Nation*, 1907.

II

We are now approaching a grave crisis in the development of Mr. Morley's Indian constitutional reforms. During the last six months a vast amount of material has been accumulated, comprising official and non-official contentions and allegations, collected from the whole of India. How will Mr. Morley deal with this mass of conflicting evidence ?

Let us consider how the matter now stands. In his Budget speech of June, 1907, Mr. Morley adumbrated certain movements in advance, relating principally to the formation of a Council of Notables, and the expansion of the Legislative Councils in India, both Imperial and Provincial. To the Government of India he assigned the duty of initiating a scheme to carry out these objects, with instructions to consult not only the local administrations, but also independent public opinion. Accordingly, the Government of India framed a draft scheme, which is set forth in the Simla Circular of August 24, 1907, and a further report is now due from them to the Secretary of State, giving their matured recommendations, after weighing the opinions called forth by their Circular. Mr. Morley retains in his own hands the ultimate decision. That gives assurance as to the general principles that will be applied.

But the immediate question that presents itself is: What method and what machinery will he adopt in order that the momentous issues raised may be fairly tried and determined? The magnitude of the task will be self-evident to those who know how fundamentally the views of European officials differ, as a rule, from those held by independent Indian opinion. It is the old quarrel between the maker of the shoe and the wearer; the old difficulty of reconciling the self-confidence of the professional artist with the feelings of the sufferer whose foot refuses to fit the model shoe. I have before me one of the most authoritative expressions of independent Indian opinion. It is a memorial prepared by the Council of the Bombay Presidency Association, and addressed to the Viceroy in Council. This memorial joins issue with the Simla Circular at every point, traversing the allegations of fact and challenging the conclusions. No one can read it without being

impressed with its knowledge and reasonableness; and we must remember that this grave document, with its 48 printed pages and 133 solid paragraphs, is only one of the many representations coming from every part of India.

How are all the issues thus raised to be tried and determined? What course can Mr. Morley pursue which will satisfy the people of India that their case has been dealt with carefully and, above all, impartially? The only course open seem to be to refer the papers, with a clear and definite reference, for report to a Parliamentary Committee or a Royal Commission. The subject, embracing, as it does, constitutional reforms of a far-reaching kind, is well worthy of such special treatment. And what is the alternative? The only other alternative is for the Secretary of State to be dependent for advice upon the members of his own Council. But, with every respect for the distinguished gentlemen who form that Council, it cannot be said that they occupy a position of impartiality when the controversy is between European official opinion on the one hand and independent Indian opinion on the other. If the procedure suggested be adopted, they would still have full opportunity of tendering their advice; for when the report of the Committee or Commission was received, the ultimate decision would still rest with the Secretary of State in Council.

To illustrate the complexity of the issues involved, I will take as an example the Council of Notables, which is, perhaps, the simplest of the reforms adumbrated by Mr. Morley, and will show briefly the scheme suggested by the Simla Circular and the objections taken by the Bombay Presidency Association. The object of this Council, as declared by Mr. Morley, is to act as an interpreter between the rulers and the ruled; to use his own phrase, the pur-

pose is a double one, (1) to elicit independent opinion, and (2) to diffuse correct information as to the actions and intentions of the Government. In pursuance of these objects, the Government of India, in their opening paragraphs, propose to give the people of India "wider opportunities of expressing their views on administrative matters." They hold that "for the present, at any rate the needs and sentiments of the masses of the people must find expression through those—whether officials or non-officials—who are acquainted with their daily life, and are qualified to speak with authority on their behalf." But they desire "free and close consultation," and express a belief that their scheme will "represent a considerable advance in the direction of bringing all classes of the people into closer relations with the Government and its officers, and of increasing their opportunities of making known their feelings and wishes in respect of administrative and legislative questions."

These be brave words. But what is the scheme proposed to carry out the objects thus stated? Even to those unacquainted with Indian affairs, the Simla scheme must read strangely, as the means to an end. Briefly stated, it is as follows: A Council called "The Imperial Advisory Council" is to be formed for purely consultative purposes; all the members to be appointed by the Viceroy; the Council to consist of about sixty members, including about twenty ruling chiefs and a suitable number of territorial magnates; the members to hold office for (say) five years, and to be eligible for reappointment; the Council to receive no legislative recognition, and not to be vested with formal powers of any sort; the Council to be purely advisory, and to deal only with such matters as may be specifically referred to it from time to time; and the proceedings of the

Council when called together for collective consultation to be, as a rule, private, informal, and confidential, and not to be published, although Government would be at liberty to make any use of them that they thought proper.

Such is the scheme by which the Simla authorities propose to give the people opportunities of making known their feelings and wishes. The Bombay Presidency Association has no difficulty in showing that such a scheme cannot possibly carry out Mr. Morley's purpose of eliciting independent opinion. Nor does it fulfil the conditions set forth in the opening paragraphs of the Circular itself. For the aristocratic classes selected for the Council are not qualified to speak for the masses of the people; and, even if they were, the restrictive procedure would render them powerless as free exponents of public opinion. The scheme is condemned because it provides no representation for trade, manufactures, or the liberal professions. No place is found for the merchant princes, the captains of industry, and the professional men who, for half a century, have taken the leading part in public and municipal affairs. Above all, the scheme is condemned because it rests entirely on official nomination, excluding the element of election, without which the people cannot choose their own spokesmen from among those who have the knowledge and independence and courage to voice effectively the needs and grievances of their poorer brethren.

This is undoubtedly the view that will be taken by the British public and Parliament when the case comes to England for consideration. If the true feelings of the people of India are to be learnt, it must be through their own representatives, elected either directly or indirectly. How can this be best accomplished? In political matters

the British people do not like evolving institutions out of their inner consciousness. Their favourite method of proceeding is to build upon some existing foundation, and to utilise whatever machinery is in practical operation, adapting it to the new requirements. And, fortunately, there already exists, in the Indian National Congress, an organisation which was founded for the express purpose of eliciting and focussing the best Indian opinion, and placing it at the service of the Government for the benefit of the people. This organisation has been in practical working for the last twenty-three years, untiringly, loyally, and at great self-sacrifice, acting as the interpreter between the rulers and the ruled; striving, indeed, to do the very work which Mr. Morley desires to see done through a Council of Notables. Such being the case, why should not this machinery be now utilised? There is nothing alarming about it. Lord Lansdowne, when Viceroy of India, said that the movement which it represented was perfectly legitimate, and, in a letter addressed by him to the General Secretary of the Congress, he said: "The Government of India recognise that the Congress movement is regarded as representing in India what in Europe would be called the more advanced Liberal party, as distinguished from the great body of the Conservative opinion which exists side by side with it." An institution thus defined by so unexceptionable an authority ought not to be outside the sympathy of Mr. Morley; and, so far as an advanced Liberal party is entitled to representation in a body intended to give expression to popular feelings and aspirations, to that extent the Indian National Congress should be allowed to contribute to the composition of the Council of Notables. If further recommendation is needed, it will be found in the words of the late Sir Richard

Garth, Chief Justice of Bengal. Writing in the "Law Magazine," this is how that stout old Conservative describes the work of the Congress leaders :—

> I will tell you what they have done. They have dared to think for themselves; not only for themselves, but for the millions of poor, ignorant people who compose our Indian Empire. They have been content to sacrifice their own interests, and to brave the displeasure of the Government, in order to lend a helping hand to those poor people. They have had the courage and the patriotism to denounce abuses which have disgraced our Indian rule for years past; which have been condemned by public opinion in India and in England, and to which the Indian Government appear to cling with a tenacity which seems utterly inexplicable. They have dared to propose reforms which, despite the resistance of the Government, have been approved by Parliament, and to endeavour to stay that fearful amount of extravagance which has been going on in India for years past, and has been the means, as some of our best and wisest councillors consider, of bringing our Eastern Empire to the verge of bankruptcy.

I trust, therefore, that in framing the constitutional reforms a real effort will be made to reach the springs of Indian popular feeling, and that the necessary enquiries will be conducted in such a way as will satisfy the people of India that their case has had a careful and impartial hearing.—*The Nation*, April, 1908.

LORD MORLEY'S INDIA BILL.

Lord Morley has fulfilled his promise to introduce his India Bill immediately after the debate on the Address. The time has therefore come for the nation to make up its mind in what spirit, and by what methods, it will meet the existing situation in India. Everyone admits that important modifications in our system of administration are necessary to satisfy modern requirements ; and Parliament will have to pass a decision on the scheme of reform now coming before it. The position is deeply interesting, and the issues are momentous as regards the future of India, and also as regards the future of the United Kingdom.

The general scope of the proposed reforms was indicated in the Message of the King-Emperor to the Princes and Peoples of India on the occasion of the Jubilee. In that gracious declaration, which confirmed and developed the principles laid down in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, he promised concessions to the wishes of the people, including the appointment of qualified Indians to the high office, the extension of representative institutions and the satisfaction of Indian aspirations as regards equality of citizenship, and a greater sphere in legislation and government. In order to fulfil these promises, Lord Morley has now prepared his Bill—the outcome of prolonged enquiry and deliberation—which will aid in giving effect to the scheme approved by the Government at home, and by Lord Minto as Viceroy of India.

The high authorities are thus all agreed as to the course to be pursued. At the same time, no one can

suppose that the task is a light one ; and it will be well at once to realise some of the principal obstacles to be overcome. The principal difficulties seem to be threefold ; 1st, the inherent difficulty of devising a scheme suited to a vast population made up of elements differing in race and creed ; 2nd, the natural reluctance of the official body to part with a portion of its authority ; and 3rd, the want of familiarity with Indian matters on the part of our legislators.

Taking these points in their order, it may be said that the inherent difficulty of the case is illustrated by the deputation on behalf of the "All-India Moslem League" which waited on Lord Morley. The object of the deputation was to protest against the method suggested in Lord Morley's despatch for the election of representatives to the Legislative Councils. That method was by what has been called joint or mixed electorates, *i.e.*, the representatives would be chosen, directly or indirectly, by electors drawn from all classes of the population within a prescribed area. The deputation expressed a fear that this method would prove detrimental to Mussulman interests, the contention being that where the majority of the electors were Hindus, this arrangement would make the Mahomedan representatives dependent on the goodwill of a rival community, and place Mussulman interests in their hands. For Mussulman representatives they desired exclusively Mussulman electors. With reference to this complaint, Lord Morley gave the deputation the assurance that the Mahomedan representation would be "adequate, real, and genuine." He further pointed out that the despatch only suggested, and did not prescribe, the joint or mixed electorates ; and he indicated no less than four ways in which, within the terms of the despatch, their wishes as regards the elections might be met.

This explanation appears to have satisfied the deputation on the particular point raised. But, underlying the specific complaint, this interview illustrates the fact that in a considerable section of the Mahomedans there exists a general apprehension that the added powers which representative institutions give to a majority may be exercised to the detriment of a minority. How can this apprehension be allayed? No doubt in part by careful consideration of concrete cases as they arise. But the chief remedy for possible friction is to be found in the reasonableness and good feeling of the Hindu and Mahomedan communities themselves. On this point Lord Morley takes a hopeful view: "From information that reaches me," he said, "I do not at all despair of meeting fair-minded critics of both communities." And this hopeful view seems to be confirmed by the conciliatory spirit manifested by the Indian National Congress, which for the last 23 years has voiced independent public opinion in India. The resolutions, passed unanimously at the recent session in Madras, are evidence of harmony among the various communities; for it must be borne in mind that the doors of the Congress are open to all, and that many distinguished Mahomedans have always been among the Congress leaders. It has, indeed, always been a prime object of the Congress to promote concord among all classes; and the Hon. G. K. Gokhale, in a remarkable speech, impressed upon his hearers that "the new powers should be exercised with moderation and restraint, and they should be zealously used for the promotion of the interests of the masses of the people."

Such utterances do not show any factious or partisan inclination; so we may hope that the details of the scheme will find a peaceful settlement. As regards the particular question of joint or mixed electorates, my own belief is

that if the Hindu leaders prefer this method, it is with no desire to dominate or oppress a minority. It is, rather, from a conviction that this is the best means of avoiding friction and promoting unity. And this view seems reasonable. For we know that any organisation formed to promote sectional interests tends to bring to the front men of extreme and militant views. A Navy League, a Tariff Association, a Society of Temperance Advocates will naturally take as their leaders those who feel most strongly regarding the cause they have at heart—enthusiasts, and sometimes even fanatics. And if the several religious communities in India specialise themselves in electioneering organisations, there is reason to fear that their representatives in the Legislative Councils will not be men of that calm and conciliatory disposition best fitted to carry through practical measures for the common good.

The second difficulty in the way of the reform scheme to which I referred above, is the natural reluctance of the Anglo-Indian officials to relinquish any portion of their authority. This point does not need elaboration. India has hitherto been in a condition of tutelage; but since 1858 at least three generations of educated Indians have passed through our schools and colleges; and they now ask to have a reasonable voice in their own affairs. The Indian Civil Service has shown itself an upright, though austere, guardian; but should now, with becoming dignity, recognise the altered position. The ward is approaching his majority and the guardian should welcome his co-operation in the labours of administration.

As regards the third difficulty, the want in Parliament of familiarity with Indian questions, there is the danger that political partisanship may carry away those who do not realise the critical position of affairs in India. In the

condition of unrest which still prevails in India, it seems almost incredible that any journal claiming patriotic feeling should act so as to stir up fresh trouble. Yet some organs in the London Press have already shown an inclination to play off one great Indian community against the other, suggesting unfairness on the part of Government as between the Hindus and Mahomedans. Such unworthy insinuations have called forth a sharp rebuke from Lord Morley, who declares that the suggestion that any member of the Government has any prejudice whatever against Mahomedans is "one of the idlest and most wicked misapprehensions that could possibly enter even into the political mind." So far as Parliament is concerned, no doubt the central principle will be to maintain inviolate that strict impartiality between castes and creeds which is the ancient and secure foundation of British rule. No departure from this well-established principle would be countenanced by a statesman of the character, and the Indian experience, of Lord Lansdowne. And we may hope, now that the Bill has come before the House of Lords, that support will be given from both sides to Lord Morley in his earnest effort "to improve Indian government, and to do full justice to all bodies of the Indian population."—*The Nation*, February, 1909.

DECENTRALISATION IN INDIA.

At the beginning of this year the Royal Commission upon Decentralisation in India submitted their report. It is a lengthy document, filling 300 folio pages of the blue-book, besides the nine volumes of evidence; so that we cannot expect the general reader to make himself master of its contents. But as the recommendations therein contained may seriously influence the particulars of Lord Morley's impending scheme of reform, it seems desirable to place before the public a note of the main issues involved.

Speaking generally, the issues, as in all Indian questions, are between European official opinion on the one hand and independent Indian opinion on the other; the former leaning towards increased departmental "efficiency," the latter towards making the bounds of freedom wider. Both these aspirations are natural and legitimate; and what we want from the Commission is a scrupulously balanced judgment as between the two. But when we look to the personnel of the Commission we find that a most unfortunate predominance has been given to the representatives of the European official side. Of the six members of the Commission, only one is an Indian, Mr. Dutt, while all, including the Chairman, are of the official class. Independent Indian opinion is, therefore, wholly unrepresented on the Commission. And this initial defect is aggravated by the fact that the three Anglo-Indian civilians, who constitute half the Commission, belong to the class of head-quarters officials, who are little in touch with the people, whose views generally differ from those of the

rank and file of the service, and who are mainly responsible for the existing over-centralisation. Also, we must regret that the opportunity was not taken to place on the Commission one or more of the independent members of the House of Commons, such as Sir Henry Cotton, who are accepted authorities regarding Indian affairs on the progressive side.

If we want to find a trustworthy presentment of the case for the Progressives, we must look to the evidence of the unofficial Indian witnesses; and the Commission would have done wisely if, instead of going, with tedious iteration, into the details of departmental mechanism, they had taken as the basis of their enquiry the clear and concise statement of popular claims (Vol. VIII, page 57) placed before them by the Hon. Mr. Gokhale on behalf of the Bombay Presidency Association. This statement, supported by the high authority of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, shows in practical fashion where the shoe of over-centralisation pinches; and to obtain fruitful results the procedure should have been to draw up issues and determine how far these reasonable desires of the people might be satisfied without (to use the words of the reference) impairing the strength and unity of the Executive power.

It is upon the district and village administration that the every-day comfort of the people chiefly depends. I will, therefore, quote in full the paragraph in which Mr. Gokhale outlines his scheme with regard to this part of the subject: "Decentralisation in district administration must be accompanied by measures for a larger association of popular representatives with the work of the administration. There is no doubt that, with the multiplication of central departments and a steady increase in the control exercised by the Secretariat of the Provincial Government the position of the

collector as the head of a district has considerably deteriorated. There is also no doubt that the people require more prompt government, and more of it, so to say, on the spot. But this object will not be secured by a mere delegation of larger powers to the collector. The time has gone by when the collector could hope to exercise—and with beneficial results—a kind of paternal authority over his district. The spread of edcation, the influence of new ideas, the steadily-growing power of the vernacular Press, make a return to the benevolent autocracy of the collector of old times impossible. The only remedy lies in carrying a substantial measure of decentralisation down to the villages and in building up local self-government from there. It will not do to be deterred by the difficulties of the task or by the possibilities of initial failure. Village Panchayats must be created. Local and municipal boards must be really popular bodies, and larger resources than they can command at present made available to them. Last, but not least, district councils must be formed, whom the collectors should be bound to consult in all important matters, and with whose assistance they may be empowered to deal, with ever-increasing finality, with questions of district administration on the spot." After thus sketching the general method of district decentralisation, Mr. Gokhale sets forth the constitution and functions of the proposed village organisation as the natural foundation upon which the edifice of local self-government must be built. The Panchayat, or village council, consisting of members hereditary, nominated and elected, is to have the disposal of small money claims, the trial of trivial offences, the management of the village forests, water supply, and sanitation, the supervision of school attendance, the distribution of agricultural advances and famine relief—in fact, the care, as in old

times, of all matters pertaining exclusively to the village. In cases of proved misconduct on the part of the Panchayat, the collector will have the power of suspension. The village becomes thus the first organised unit in the administration; and the two vital principles are established: (1) that everything that can be done in the area shall primarily be done there, and (2) that the control shall be exercised from without, and not from within.

The second unit of administration would be the Taluka, or sub-district, comprising a group of villages. Here the same principles would be applied. The Taluka Board should be a wholly elected body, charged, as at present, with the administration of matters exclusively appertaining to the Taluka; the Government retaining in its hands the power of enforcing action, if its advice and warning are disregarded, by suspending a Board temporarily and appointing in its place a small body of nominated members.

The village Panchayat and Taluka Board may be likened to the parish council and rural district council in England; and we now come to unit No. 3, the district or collectorate which corresponds with the English county and forms the most important centre of local administration. It is with regard to this unit No. 3, the district, that the most far-reaching changes are advocated, with a view to giving to it something of the autonomy of a Native State. At present considerable administrative duties are assigned by the Local Government Acts to the existing district board, and Mr. Gokhale submits suggestions to make this board more representative and efficient. But he would prefer that the district board should be abolished if its functions were made over to a small district council, partly elected and partly nominated, which would assist the

collector in the current administration of the district. The principal evils of the present district system are aloofness from the people, secrecy, and want of finality; and all these evils would be mitigated if it was made obligatory on the collector to consult the council in all important matters. Large additional powers might be delegated to him, provided these powers were exercised in association with the council, so that ordinary questions of administration would be disposed of on the spot without unnecessary reference to higher officials. In confidential and urgent matters the collector would act on his own responsibility; in ordinary cases his decision would be final if he carried his council with him; otherwise, he would report for the orders of Government. The hands of the collector would further be strengthened by restoring to him his ancient position as real head of all executive departments in his district. Those who have experience of the work know how completely of late years the authority of the collector, as the representative of the "Sirkar," has been undermined and destroyed by the encroachments of the great centralised departments: Revenue, Survey, Forests, Irrigation, Public Works, Sanitation, and so forth. The subordinates of all these departments are located in the district, and can disregard the wishes of the collector if they can count upon the support of their departmental chief at the seat of Government.

Finally, to consolidate the position of the "Collector in Council," as the effective head of the district Self-Government, there remains an important proposal, which is to get rid of the intermediate offices which obstruct direct communication between the district and the Governor in Council. Mr. Gokhale states this condition as

follows: "If this machinery (the district council) is brought into existence, and if larger powers are then delegated to the collector, I would have above the latter only the one higher authority in the Presidency, *viz.*, the Central Government. This means the abolition of all the commissionerships except that in Sind. The collectors will then correspond direct with the Central Government and probably a third member will have to be added to the Executive Council. To enable the Government to exercise general supervision over district administration it will be necessary to appoint Inspectors-General, who will tour round the Presidency on behalf of the Government." This completes the scheme which was placed before the Commission on behalf of the Bombay Presidency Association. And it may be noted that the principle of "administering our collectorates more on the model of a well-ordered Native State" was approved in the Minority Report of Lord Welby's Commission, when it was pointed out that Lord Salisbury spoke of well-governed Native States as highly favourable to the well-being of the Indian people.

At page 297 of the Report will be found the "Conclusions and Recommendations" of the Commission. As regards the villages, they recognise the value of the ancient organisation: "It is most desirable to constitute and develop village Panchayats for the administration of certain local affairs within the villages." And as regards provincial Governments, they support the popular view, which is adverse to one-man Government by a Lieutenant-Governor. "We prefer," they say, "a regular Council Government such as exists in Madras and Bombay, with a Governor usually, but not invariably, appointed from home. We think that all Council Governments should consist of not less than four members besides the

Governor, and that not less than two of these should be appointed under the conditions which now apply to Madras and Bombay. This enlargement would admit of the appointment of specially qualified natives of India."

It is in dealing with the popular scheme for constituting district Self-Government under a Collector in Council that the Commission reveals the forwardness of the bureaucratic diathesis. The carefully-framed proposals put forward on behalf of the Indian public are hardly considered, the bold proposal to abolish the office of commissioner as superfluous and obstructive being apparently sufficient to condemn the whole scheme. With almost pathetic insistence they strive to find possible uses for this fifth wheel in the administrative coach, and curtly decide not only to maintain the office but to magnify it : "We consider it essential to give larger powers to commissioners, and reject proposals for their abolition or their conversion into mere advisory and inspecting officers." We must hope that Lord Morley will himself look into this matter and apply the necessary corrective to the defects arising from the purely official personnel of the Commission.—*The Nation*, 30th October, 1909.

THE DUAL SPIRIT IN BRITISH INDIA.

The Government of India have issued a Circular, dated Simla, March 14 last, regarding (A) the entent of the existing disaffection, with (B) its causes, and (C) its remedies; and in view of the debate on the Indian Budget, it seems desirable that this important document should be brought prominently to the notice of Parliament and the public.

THE EXTENT OF DISAFFECTION.

As reards (A) *the extent of the disaffection*, the Government state that in no part of India is a considerable proportion of the population imbued with a spirit of disaffecion; the great body of the people are entirely loyal; with a few negligible exceptions, the disaffection is confined to the "literate middle-classes," being in the main an intellectual sentiment. The party of disaffection is small in numbers, but of considerable influence, and inspired by convictions strongly, and even fanatically, held. This party is divided into two classes, both opposed to the continuance of British rule, class (1) desiring autonomy, but seeking to obtain it by passive resistance and continual sapping of the foundations of loyalty by attacks in the Press, on the platform, and on more private occasions. This branch of the party of disaffection does not ordinarily advocate violence, though many secretly sympathise with outrage and assassination, and all are unwilling to assist in the suppression of political crime. On the other hand, class (2) advocate and practise methods of terrorism against public servants, European and Indian, and all persons

assisting justice with information or evidence. This class consists of youths still attending school or college, or who have recently left, and belong mostly to Bengal, East Bengal, and Bombay; but have spread to the Central Provinces, and the Punjab, and even to the Native States. The United Provinces and Madras are little affected, though there are danger spots which need watching, while Burma and the North-Western Frontier are apparently unaffected. These youthful terrorists are banded into societies, but it is impossible to say how far such associations are under any control, though there are "reasons for suspecting that the real leaders of the party of violence conceal themselves under the cloak of more moderate pinions."

THE CAUSE OF THE TROUBLE.

Next as to (B) *the causes of disaffection.* The Government of India consider that there is no spirit of revolt against excessive taxation or oppressive laws, though disaffection may have some slight economic basis. In the main it is an "intellectual sentiment not founded on any material grievances." The Governor-General in Council believes that the movement is "in the main due to ignorance and misapprehension of the nature and consequences of British rule in India." He recognises that there exists a residuum of implacable hatred of all alien intrusion but the majority of the advocates of Nationalism have been misled by shallow arguments against foreign rule, while the other side is seldom, if ever, put before them. It is in the domain of history and economics that erroneous opinions are most frequently held; lessons from the West are misapplied to the present circumstances of India; broad generalisations of European writers on political science are stated without mention of important reserva-

tions; and students without guidance are led to believe that what is approved for Switzerland or Italy must necessarily be good for India. In the region of economics "the most mischievous doctrine is that which is based on the crude theory that India is drained of her wealth by her connection with Great Britain. This opinion is honestly held by many young graduates who never hear it controverted." The prevalence of this idea has done "incalculable mischief."

THE REMEDY PROPOSED.

We now come to (C) *the remedy*, which is, that all branches of the administration should "combat misrepresentation and remove misapprehension regarding the character and results of British rule." It is upon the district officer that the task of checking disloyalty will chiefly fall. He should obtain the co-operation of loyal men of influence; he should also keep in touch with those whose political leanings are suspected; and when there are signs of a seditious movement, he should promptly send for the leaders and convince them of the mischievous consequences. When on tour, district officers should see all the local notabilities, and encourage a "frank and full discussion both of local affairs and matters of more general interests." Government prefers persuasion to threats; remonstrance to prosecution; prevention to punishment. Again, educational officers occupy a favourable position for combating the spread of seditious views. By sympathetic discussion and kindly guidance they should impress on all professors and schoolmasters the heavy responsibility which rests upon them to guide youths aright. Abstention from seditious teaching is not sufficient. They should study the arguments put forward in support of the doctrine of the "drain," and seize every opportunity of

exposing its fallacy. Universities should inculcate sound views by encouraging the production of suitable text-books and the appointment of scholars of distinction to give special lectures. If in a school or college sedition is taught, either directly or indirectly, the aid and countenance of Government will be withdrawn. Then public servants are warned that they will be summarily dismissed if there is good ground for suspecting seditious leanings on their part; they will, further, be held responsible for the conduct of their sons and relatives. Societies actually and ostensibly existing for innocent objects will be suppressed, if they degenerate into seditious associations. Religious managers will be held responsible if sacred writings are perverted for purpose of sedition, and if politics are grafted on religion. Finally as regards evidence in political cases, leading men should be taken into confidence, and it should be impressed upon them that failure to assist in obtaining evidence "must infallibly lead to the breakdown of the liberal system of administering the law which the people at present enjoy, and the application of a more harsh procedure," which involves action on suspicion, and "the risk that innocent people may suffer with the guilty."

THE VICEROY'S POLICY.

In conclusion, Lord Minto declares that the maintenance of British rule is for the good of India, and that he will suppress all attempts to subvert his authority. He desires conciliation, but if that fails he will adopt sterner methods. For Lord Minto's general policy, as set forth in the last paragraph, there can be nothing but approval. And India may take heart of grace if this pronouncement read in connection with the just and kindly sentiments which he is reported to have expressed in a recent inter-

view. In this interview Lord Minto, recognising legitimate Indian aspirations, is reported to have said to Mr. Carpenter, an American gentleman, that "we have a new India and a new people. The conditions are entirely different, and they grow more so every year." His Excellency admitted to his interviewer that our administration was practically autocratic. We must rule the country to-day, but we shall have to adopt conciliatory methods. We shall have to use more diplomacy, and give the Indians a greater share in the administration." This is good but even more gratifying is the confidence he expresses in the patriotism and prudence of the experienced Indian gentlemen who now sit in his Legislative Council. This is how he refers to them. "These men want peace and good government, and they will be backward in advocating anything that would bring about a revolution. We have many Indians of ability. We have some who who are conservative, and many patriots who are anxious to do all they can for the permanent good of the country and the people." These sentiments are in accordance with the wise benevolence of Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, and with the Message of King Edward to the princes and people of India on the occasion of the Jubilee; and they breathe that healing spirit of sympathy which, as Prince of Wales, the present King commended in his speech at the Guildhall.

CONFLICTING VOICES.

Such being the accepted spirit of the administration, we may ask why there should exist in India any unrest, any disaffection, among a people exceptionally law-abiding and long-suffering? Referring to the Simla Circular, we find it stated that "the great body of the people are entirely loyal," while officials are directed to use concilia-

tory methods ; to get into touch with the people ; to take leading Indians into their confidence, and obtain their co-operation. This is pleasant reading, and is in harmony with the mild and friendly policy inculcated from the highest quarters. But there is a jarring note in the circular ; threats of harsh measures, involving action on suspicion, and "the risk that innocent people may suffer with the guilty." There are, indeed, two conflicting voices in this manifesto—one kindly and parental, the other typical of the pedagogue, with frowning face and uplifted rod ; one expressing what Edmund Burke calls "the inbred integrity and piety" of the British people, the other betraying the inevitable diathesis of an official autocrat. This antagonism is typical of the struggle going on within our Indian administration, the beneficial reforms of Lord Morley being crippled by the hostile action of the official on the spot. This internal conflict has arisen because Lord Morley and those who think with him are in sympathy with the constitutional section of Indian reformers—those who accept the British connection ; who for practical work, have organised themselves in the Indian National Congress ; and who, to use Lord Minto's words, desire to do all they can for the permanent good of the country and the people. Why should the Indian Civil Service maintain a feud with these "intellectuals"?

Here we have two bodies, one official, the other non-official, both highly educated, both honest and industrious, both desiring the welfare of India. Why should antagonism between them be kept up—irritating and exhausting to the British official, painful and disastrous to the whole educated class? To me this antagonism appears absolutely useless and unnecessary. If district officials will accept the friendly advice and help of independent educated Indians,

they will find life much pleasanter than at present. They will then realise that the best cure for "disaffection" is the development of "affection"; they will be in touch with the sorrows of the people, and will no longer assert that no "material grievances" exist; they will not charge the "intellectuals" with want of understanding; and they will not be under the delusion that the raiyat's mind is exercised by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's theory of the economic drain. If they will enter upon a genuine course of wise conciliation, outrages will cease and "extremists" will gradually melt away.—*The Nation*, July, 1910.

MR. GOKHALE'S EDUCATION BILL.

Sir W. Wedderburn addressed the following letter to the "Daily News" from the Hotel Grande Bretagne at Vichy on the subject of Mr. Gokhale's Compulsory Education Bill, May 1911 :—

British progressives, being occupied with the Constitutional struggle at home, have had little leisure to study the proceedings of the Viceroy's reconstructed Council at Calcutta, and to note the first fruits of Lord Morley's reforms, as shown in the admirable debate on Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Eudcation Bill. Will you, therefore, allow me to indicate the scope of this measure, at once bold and cautious, by which the reformers propose to bring the people into active co-operation with the Government in its policy of extending elementary education to the masses in India.

Briefly stated, Mr. Gokhale's scheme is to give power, under carefully guarded conditions, to Muni-

cipalities and District Boards to make elementary education free and compulsory within their local areas. In every country experience has shown that no real progress can be made without the element of compulsion. Putting aside Europe and America, and taking Asiatic countries, we find that success has been achieved in Japan, and even in the Philippines, where compulsion has been introduced through the Municipalities. And coming nearer home, an Indian prince, the Gaekwar of Baroda, has shown a briliant example. In 1906, after an experimental stage in selected areas, his Highness made elementary education free and compulsory throughout his dominions, for boys from six to twelve years of age, and for girls from six to eleven ; the result being that in Baroda 79·6 per cent. of such children are now at school, compared with 21·5 per cent. in British India. Such has been the unvarying success wherever elementary education has been free and compulsory. Without compulsion, what has been the result in British India ? Under a voluntary system the Government with its best efforts during half a century, still finds that four-fifths of the villages are without a school: that seven-eighths of the children are without elementary education ; and that less than 6 per cent. of the population can read and write.

To all who feel a responsibility for the welfare of the Indian masses, I would earnestly commend a perusal of the debate on this all-important matter. Free copies can be obtained by applying to Mr. W. Douglas Hall, at 84, Palace Chambers, Westminster, S. W. In the debate three points will specially attract the sympathy of the English reader : (1) The intention of the reformers that any local unpopularity arising from compulsion or an educational rate, should fall upon themselves and not upon the

Government; (2) the desire of educated Brahmins to share with the people the education formerly a monopoly (jealously guarded) of the priestly class : and (3) the keen support given to the Bill by the representative Mahomedans, and their willingness to be taxed for the education of the masses.

In order to give moral support to the Indian reformers in this unselfish labour, I hope to form an Auxiliary Committee in England. But the lion in the path of free elementary education is no doubt the financial difficulty. Looking to the extreme poverty of the Indian people, Municipalities and District Boards will need to take their courage in both hands before they propose an educational rate. Cannot a kindly millionaire be found who will give them heart by offering to meet their contributions with an equivalent sum? As Mr. Gokhale has well put it, "Elementary education for the mass of the people means something more than a mere capacity to read and write. It means for them a keener enjoyment of life, and a more refined standard of living. It means the greater moral and economic efficiency of the individual. It means a higher level of intelligence for the whole community generally."

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION FOR THE MASSES.

Replying to the Address of the Calcutta University, King George said :—

It is my wish that there may be spread over the land a network of schools and colleges, from which will go forth loyal and manly and useful citizens, able to hold their own in industries and agriculture and all the vocations of life. And it is my wish, too, that the homes of my Indian subjects may be brighteoed and their labour sweetened by the spread of knowledge with what follows in its train, a higher level of thought, of comfort, and of health. It is through education that my wish will be fulfilled, and the cause of education in India will ever be very close to my heart.

In these wise and sympathetic words the Sovereign gave expression to the nobler sentiments of the British people in their relation to the Indian people. The educational activities here advocated are what India craves for; and the Royal declaration may be taken as the welcome response to the appeal made on behalf of the masses by Mr. Gokhale, when he pleaded in the Viceroy's Council for his scheme of free and compulsory education :—

Eelementary education, he said, for the mass of the people means something more than a mere capacity to read and write. It means for them a keener enjoyment of life, and a more refined standard of living. It means the greater moral and economic efficiency of the individual. It means a higher level of intelligence for the whole community generally.

THE EXAMPLE OF OTHER COUNTRIES.

It thus appears that the aspirations of the Indian people, voiced by leading intellectuals, are in exact accordance with the heart-felt wish of King George. The question is : How can this wish be fulfilled ; how is a network of schools to be spread over the land? The choice as regards the Primary schools lies between two methods: (*a*) the system where fees are exacted and

attendance is voluntary; and (*b*) the system where the education is free and the attendance compulsory. All civilised countries have begun with the voluntary system—and abandoned it. In every case experience has shown that no real progress can be made without the element of compulsion. And in her educational methods Asia is following the example of Europe and America. Success has thus been achieved in Japan; and even in the Philippines, where one-fourth of the inhabitants are still barbarians. There the American Government, working through the municipalities, have introduced the element of compulsion, with the result that the rate of school attendance in the Philippines is said to be ten times as great as that in British India. Coming nearer home, we find satisfactory results of compulsion in Ceylon; while in India itself, an Indian prince, the Gaekwar of Baroda, has shown a brilliant example. In 1906, after an experimental stage in selected areas, His Highness made elementary education free and compulsory throughout his dominons for boys from six to twelve years of age, for girls from six to eleven; the result being that in Baroda 79·6 per cent. of such childern are now at school, compared with 21·5 per cent. in British India. Such has been the unvarying success wherever elementary education has been free and compulsory. Without compulsion, what has been the result in British India? Under the voluntary system the Government, with its best efforts during half a century, still finds that four-fifths of the villages are without a school; that seven-eighths of the childeren are without elementary education; and that less than 6 per cent. of the population can read and write.

MR. GOKHALE'S SCHEME.

With these facts before us, it seems clear that only

by making elementary education free and compulsory can the Royal wishes and the aspirations of the Indian people be adequately fulfilled. Sooner or later a new departure must be made. Has the time come; and are the general circumstances now favourable for a cautious and experimental step forward? Let us consider the case for early action, as represented by Mr. Gokhale's Bill together with the objections raised on the other side. Mr. Gokhale's scheme is purely permissive. Briefly stated, its object is to give power, under carefully guarded conditions, to municipalities and district boards to make elementary education free and compulsory within their local areas, all reasonable opportunities for control being reserved for the Government. These conditions seem prudent and well suited to present circumstances, providing as they do for a gradual extension of the system in those localities where it commends itself to the approval of the people. And looking to the general purposes of the Bill, we must find it highly gratifying that the first fruits of Lord Morley's reformed Councils should take the form of a generous scheme initiated by the educated class for the benefit of the unlettered masses; a scheme framed by so experienced an educationist as Mr. Gokhale on the most approved scientific lines. By taking the initiative, the Indian reformers seek to co-operate with the Government in approaching a difficult and delicate public duty; taking upon themselves, instead of leaving to the Government, any unpopularity which may arise from compulsion, or from the imposition of an educational rate.

THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION.

Unfortunately, the Bill, in its present form, is opposed by all the heads of the local administrations.

The unanimity in their verdict is remarkable, though the reasons given for their conclusions differ very widely, varying from that of the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, who considers that elementary education has made so much progress that no compulsion is required to that of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, who reports that the majority of the people are "strongly opposed not merely to compulsion, but to any education whatsoever." The Governor of Madras admits that "the most pressing need in India at the present time is the wider diffusion of education," but he sees objections to every provision of the Bill, which he considers "unnecessary, premature, and open to objections of a serious character on educational, political, and financial grounds." On the other hand, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal "sees no objection *per se* to the principle of compulsory education, which is a recognised policy of European government but he holds that the immediate enforcement of elementary education would be attended with the gravest dangers. The Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces recognises "the high aims and the unselfish zeal" of Mr. Gokhale, but he regards the principle of compulsion as "impossible" and fraught with serious danger.

The printed official reports of the seven local administrations, with their enclosures, are very voluminous and difficult to summarise, looking to the discordant nature of the arguments adduced. I will, therefore, take the despatch of the Bombay Government as typical of the others, and briefly note the main facts of the case. The proposition of the Bombay Government is that Mr. Gokhale's scheme cannot be accepted unless it would (1) "be in harmony with the policy of government; (2) would be politically desirable; and (3)

would ensure the progress of education among the classes most in need of it."

THE ACCEPTED POLICY.

Let us take each of these points in turn. As to the accepted policy of the Imperial Government regarding elementary education, there is no doubt. So far back as 1854 Sir Charles Wood's famous Minute gave a foremost place to the education of the masses. The same policy was emphasised in the recommendations of the Education Commission of 1883. In 1904 Lord Curzon placed it on record that primary education had "hitherto received insufficient attention and an inadequate share of the public funds." And as directly bearing on the present controversy, we have the declaration of the present Secretary of State for India. On July 27 last, the Marquis of Crewe, speaking in reply to a deputation which presented to him a Memorial in support of Mr. Gokhale's Bill concluded as follows:—

> I am glad to be able to say in reply to you that we have always viewed the objects you favour with unbounded sympathy. This question of education has been given and is receiving, much close consideration and anxious thought on the part of the Viceroy and his advisers and of myself here. I can assure you that we regard with the utmost sympathy every attempt which is made, as this is made, on reasonable and modern lines to attempt to cope with the tremendous difficulties which exist in the absence of anything like a complete system of primary education in India, which is, perhaps, the greatest reproach which exists against the British system of government in India. It is impossible for me to say more, but I can assure you of my own warmest sympathy, and can promise you the sympathy of the Government of India on this subject of paramount importance.

As to the present unhappy condition of primary education, there is no difference of opinion. The Bombay Government admit that "the illiteracy of the masses in India is made a constant reproach against British rule." All are agreed as to the diagnosis of the disease. The difference of opinion arises as regards the remedy to be

applied. On the one hand, we have the scientific method. Universal experience is in favour of making elementary education free and compulsory; and this is the principle embodied in Mr. Gokhale's Bill. On the other hand, the Bombay Government are content to continue the voluntary system which has been discarded in all civilised countries; and object strongly to elementary education being made either compulsory "in any form," or free by the abolition of fees. As between these contentions, what is the policy of His Majesty's Government? It is clearly in favour of a new departure. What is now wanted is a vigorous move forward on scientific lines; and, as regards the method, Lord Crewe has specifically expressed sympathy with Mr. Gokhale's scheme, which he speaks of as being "one of almost extreme moderation." On the first point, therefore, we must hold that it is the Bombay administration, not Mr. Gokhale, that is out of "harmony with the policy of Government."

IS THE BILL DESIRABLE?

The next point is whether the Bill is politically desirable, and the adverse judgment seems to rest mainly on the allegation that Indian public opinion is strongly hostile. The Bombay Government assert that compulsion would be "certain, in the peculiar conditions of India, to arouse the deepest resentment." When the partition of Bengal caused popular resentment, hundreds of protest meetings were held, and the resolutions passed expressed strong feeling. Where is now the evidence of such a feeling? The Bombay correspondence certainly contains no such evidence. The despatch gives a summary of opinions called for by the Bombay Government, and these do not record the smallest manifestation of popular displeasure. On the contrary, non-official opinion, as reported, seems

overwhelmingly in favour of the Bill. Moreover, the persons selected by the Bombay Government for consultation were largely officials and Europeans, and they evidently were not so capable of expressing the popular feeling as the people themselves. Yet, even among those consulted, opinion was much divided. The Director of Public Instruction and the Educational Officers, except in Sind, are willing that the experiment of free and compulsory education should be tried where the conditions seem favourable. The Commissioner of the Northern Division is favourable. He remarks that in Gujerat, with the example of Baroda so close, it is desirable to have the power to introduce compulsory education; otherwise comparisons will be drawn, to the disadvantage of the British Government. He summarises the opinions of the Collectors of his division, from which it appears that all except one are in favour of the Bill. The Commissioner of the Central Division is against the Bill, and carries with him the majority of his Collectors. There is no report of the Collector of Poona, and the Collector of West Khandesh is favourable. This Commissioner admits that "the non-officials consulted by the Collectors are apparently without exception in favour of the Bill." The Commissioner of the Southern Division is favourable; of the Collectors, three are unfavourable, two favourable, and one doubtful. Of the twenty-five non-official members of the Governor's Legislative Council, eighteen are favourable, and seven against. The Chairman of the Poona School Board reports that the School Board are unanimously in favour of the Bill. And, finally, all the public meetings held were unanimous and enthusiastic in its support. Of these public meetings, two were of the backward classes, held in Bombay and Poona; two of the millhands in Bombay; two of the

citizens generally at Ahmedabad and Broach. There is no record of any public meeting in opposition to the Bill. On the second point, therefore, it may be said that, so far as the evidence of popular feeling goes, there is nothing to show that the scheme is not politically desirable.

WILL PROGRESS BE ENSURED?

There remains to consider the third point, whether the Bill would ensure the progress of education among the classes most in need of it? Under this heading, the most important plea of the Bombay Government is that education is essentially a matter for local administration; that at present it is entirely controlled by the Local Government; that the provisions of the Bill are not compatible with the Bombay system; and that All-India legislation on this subject would be a retrograde step, leading to excessive centralisation. The Bombay Government state that they are now elaborating plans for a wide extension of primary education; and they claim that legislation in this department should be undertaken by the expanded Provincial Councils. There is force in this plea for Provincial legislation; and the Bombay Government should lose no time in placing their scheme before the world. It appears that they are not altogether averse from adopting the provisions of Mr. Gokhale's Bill in a modified form; and their scheme will, no doubt, receive popular welcome, provided always that it conforms to the policy of the Imperial Government, and commends itself to educated Indian opinion.

THE QUESTION OF UNPOPULARITY.

As noted above, the objections to Mr. Gokhale's Bill raised by the various local governments are divergent. But in one respect the despatches are in unison. They all betray a somewhat unheroic dread of incurring unpopularity. And this nervousness is the more remarkable because the

reports do not disclose any evidence of popular disapproval. On the contrary, all the expressions of public opinion seem strongly in favour of the Bill. Besides the public meetings in the Bombay Presidency already referred to we find reports in the Press of twelve meetings held in the Bengal Provinces, with resolutions passed in support of the Bill, including one by the Bengal Provincial Conference, and one by the Behar Landholders' Association. In the United Provinces eleven meetings are reported, including those held in the leading cities, such as Lucknow, Cawnpore, Agra, Benares, and Allahabad. In the Punjab six meetings, including favourable resolutions by the Moslem League at Lahore and Multan. In the Madras Presidency there were public meetings in all the leading towns; and in Madras itself, besides a public meeting of citizens, there were favourable resolutions by the Senate and Corporation, and by the Moslem League. In the Central Provinces and Berar there have been similar meetings at Nagpur and Amraoti. In face of this evidence of popular approval, it is difficult to understand why the local Governments are so timid. Their distrust of the people does not seem at all justified. Indeed, it is an injustice to the intelligence of the Indian community to assume that they will resent a measure for the benefit of the masses which though in a certain sense drastic, is purely benevolent and unselfish.

In the meantime, we learn that the Bill has been thrown out in the Viceregal Council, in deference, no doubt, to the opposition of the local Governments. Mr. Gokhale (though in weak health) intends to proceed to England, in order to plead the cause of his people; and no doubt, British public opinion will endorse the wise and generous views of the Sovereign and his advisers. The best Indian public opinion on this vital question is summed

up in the Minute recorded, as his last great service to India, by my lamented friend, the late Hon. V. Krishnaswami Iyer, the Indian Member of the Madras Government. Dissenting from his colleagues, he said :—

The conclusion to which I have come is that the Bill is desirable and necessary ; that it is conceived in the best interests of education ; that there is no reasonable probability of political or other danger arising from its enforcement ; that it will largely accelerate the pace of educational progress. . . . It seems to me that real political danger lies in resisting a large mass of enlightened opinion supported by European missionaries and by large numbers of Englishmen connected with the administration of the country, so as to leave an abiding source of irritation and bitterness and a standing theme for a widespread public agitation which cannot make for the peace and good government of the country.—*The Nation*, April, 1912.

HIS MAJESTY'S VISIT TO INDIA.

In response to a request from the Editor of the "Indian Review" to join in a symposium on "The significance of the King's visit to India," Sir William wrote the following words in the January number of the "Indian Review" for 1912 :

You ask me to join in a symposium and to tell you what I think of the announcements at the Delhi Durbar. My feeling is that they are almost too good to be true. They seem to me admirable, whether we look (1) to what has actually been decided, or (2) to what is "adumbrated" for the future, or (3) to a spirit which illuminates the whole proceedings. As to (1) the Partition of Bengal has been rectified and thus the chief root of bitterness, affecting all India has been taken away; the viceregal capital has been removed from the Anglo-Indian influence of Calcutta to the purely Indian surroundings of Delhi; and a handsome contribution has been given to popular education, with a promise of support "on a generous scale" in the future. As regards (2) we see adumbrated the federation of the great Provinces, leading directly to self-government; and (3) the whole announcements breathe a spirit of justice and sympathy. There has, indeed, been a most happy conjunction of circumstances. Indian public opinion matured and focussed by the Indian National Congress is in complete accord with the true principles of British Rule; and His Majesty the King Emperor, speaking on behalf of the British people, has expressed his "affection for the loyal Princes and the faithful peoples of India." I look forward with assured hope to a new era for India of happiness and progress.

THE PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION.

I

Lord Islington and his colleagues have returned to England, after completing in India one stage of their enquiry. It is understood that they are now considering the evidence taken by them in India, and it seems opportune to draw attention to a significant change of procedure which they found themselves constrained to adopt soon after opening their enquiry at Madras.

At first the proceedings were open to the public. But almost immediately the Commission came into somewhat abrupt contact with the real underlying difficulty of the situation, *i.e.*, the conflict of interest between the European covenanted civilians, who enjoy a practical monopoly of high office in India, and the great body of educated Indians who, under Acts of Parliament and Royal proclamations, claim an effective share in the administration of their own country. So inconveniently candid, as the evidence proceeded, were the expressions of opinion on both sides, that the Commission found it expedient to reserve, for examination in camera, that portion of the evidence which was leading to personal recriminations, and tended to aggravate racial antagonism.

By this precaution the Commissioners appear to have averted, for the time, a public display of popular feeling. But it is evident that sooner or later they must face what I have called the real underlying difficulty, and decide between competing claims; for under the terms of the reference the duty is laid upon them "to consider the

requirements of the public service, and to recommend such changes as may seem expedient," and the principal duty thus involved is the selection and organisation of the public agency by which the Government of India is carried on. Fortunately, the difficulty is not insuperable, for the materials available for State employment are all good of their kind, only care is needed in holding the balance with justice and a single eye to the public good. Two classes are competing for the public favour; on the one hand, experienced European administrators, trained in Western methods; on the other hand, Indian intellectuals, in touch with the people; both classes possess peculiar merits; there is room for both in the public service; and it is the office of the Commissioners, acting in the interest of the public, to allot to each class the position and duties best suited to its special qualifications. Let us then consider briefly the requirements of the public service. In other words, What is the work to be done, and who are the persons best qualified to do it? Evidently, before selecting the tools, we must realise what is the job we have in hand.

In considering the nature of public work in India it appears that, as regards duties and qualifications, a broad distinction may be drawn between (*a*) the agency required for the general administration, and (*b*) the agency (of an expert kind) required for the specialised departments. Both these elements are needful; but at present their mutual relations are not satisfactory, and any scheme of readjustment must take note of the existing inconveniences, and provide for harmonious working in the future.

THE EVIL OF CENTRALISATION.

The existing inconveniences arise mainly from historic causes, for originally the Indian Civil Service was constituted with sole reference to the requirements of (*a*) the

general administration, no attempt being made to secure (*b*) expert qualifications. The young men selected through Haileybury College, or by open competition, represented a good average of character and education; and these qualifications were at first sufficient for the all-round duties of administration inherited from their Indian predecessors. With the help of subordinates skilled in ancient local methods, the Collector, as a "handy man," undertook with fair success the multifarious duties of an administrative district equal in area to an English county, representing in his person the Sirkar in all departments, as police officer, judge, builder of roads, bridges, and waterworks, educationist, officer of health, forester, and so forth. But as time went on there came a demand for more up-to-date skill in each of these departments, and accordingly from time to time experts were imported from Europe, both for district work and as advisers at the headquarters of Government. This worked well enough as long as the executive authority of the Collector, as head of the district, was duly maintained. But a fatal mistake was made when these foreign experts, instead of remaining subordinates in the local administration and advisers to the central Government, were allowed to build up for themselves great centralised departments which usurped executive functions in the districts and villages, and gradually absorbed all authority at headquarters. Thus almost insensibly has been created a "tyranny of office boxes," developing "the great mischief of over-centralisation" lamented by Lord Morley, with the consequent destruction of the district administration and of the ancient autonomy of the village communities.

What is now wanted is such a reorganisation of the official machinery as will put a stop to these banefu

encroachments. Lord Ripon's wise policy of local self-government should be revived and developed, the village being restored to its old-world efficiency as the self-governing unit, while the Collector, fortified by the co-operation of a representative District Council, would become the centre of progress and local development, on the lines of a well-ordered Native State.

ELASTICITY IN THE DISTRICTS.

By such a measure of decentralisation we should introduce into local administration the element of elasticity and growth, in place of sterilising uniformity, allowing each district to work out its own salvation in accordance with its natural resources. For as one Native State differs from another, so also, as regards economic conditions, does one British district differ from another; thus in the Bombay Presidency there is little or nothing in common between the cotton plains of Dharwar, the rocky coast of Ratnagiri, the forests of Canara, and the canal irrigation in Sind. It is, therefore, evident that an executive centralised at headquarters must result in failure. Each district requires special treatment as regards agriculture, forestry, irrigation, and other local requirements; and Government would do well, when providing expert co-operation, to extend to British districts the method found suitable in the case of Native States. In a Native State it often happens that the Durbar, when contemplating some large public work, such as railway extension or water supply, applies to the Government for expert assistance. It is then the practice to depute from the proper departments trained officials of the grade and qualifications desired, these officials being paid by the Native State, and working under the orders of the Durbar. A similar discretion should be allowed to the Collector as the head of a

British district. He should be allowed to indent on the proper departments for the expert assistants of the grade he requires, whether in connection with agriculture, engineering, forests, education, or other local needs. But these men, when attached to a district establishment, and paid from the district funds, must be under the orders of the district administration, and their duties should be limited to advice and inspection, all executive functions being performed by the ordinary district staff, working through the hereditary village officers and servants. As regards technical matters, the expert officer serving in a district would communicate with the chief of his department, who, as the responsible adviser at headquarters, would inspect the work done and keep the Government informed as to its progress and efficiency.

THE CIVILIAN MONOPOLY.

Such being the duties to be performed, we may now return to the problem stated at the commencement, and consider how, in the public interest, the agencies (*a*) and (*b*) can best be apportioned to the competing claimants. The problem is a complicated one, and in this brief article there is only space to recall two practical suggestions, put forward some years ago, having for their object to smooth racial differences, and to give to the Government the best choice of administrative material. The suggestions are contained in the Minority Report (paragraphs 79 and 80) of the Royal Commission of 1895 on Indian Expenditure, of which Lord Welby was chairman; and they relate to the two most prominent difficulties of the situation, viz., "the claim of the Covenanted Civil Service to a monopoly of the higher appointments, as the prize in the open competition; and the doctrine of an 'irreducible minimum' of

European agency, as being necessary to maintain British supremacy."

With regard to these difficulties, it was pointed out in the Report that originally the high rates of pay were fixed in order to induce Europeans of the best class to accept service in India. The salaries, therefore, could be regarded as consisting of two parts, (*a*) the market value of the work to be done, and (*b*) compensation for exile in a tropical climate; and the proposal put forward was, that for the future the prize offered at the competitive examination should be, not admission into a close service with uncertain and dwindling privileges, but a yearly personal allowance, to be drawn by the successful candidate as (*b*) compensation for exile, during the time his services were at the disposal of the Government of India; this allowance being in addition to the pay of his appointment. If this change were made, the vexed questions arising out of an official monopoly would be got rid of. Further, all salaries in India could be scaled down to (*a*) their proper market value, and a direct financial saving would be effected by the employment of Indians, who would not require compensation for exile.

While accepting conditionally the doctrine of an "irreducible minimum" of European agency, as being needed to maintain British supremacy, the Minority Report recommended a definite limit to the importation of costly foreign agency, when good material was obtainable on the spot. Accordingly, the proposal was that the Secretary of State, looking to political considerations, might each year fix a minimum budget allotment to be at the disposal of the Government of India for European agency, but that at the same time, looking to the natural claim of Indians to the public service of their own country, he should also fix

a maximum allotment for such agency; and it was added that, as British supremacy was clearly an imperial interest, the Imperial Treasury should contribute to the extra cost of the European agency employed in maintaining that supremacy.

The attention of the Royal Commission is respectfully invited to the two practical suggestions indicated above as tending to meet the requirements of the public service, while promoting harmony among competing interests.—*The New Statesman*, July, 1913.

II

In a letter to "The New Statesman" of June 19, 1915, *Sir William Wedderburn indicates briefly the position of the several parties concerned, and to suggest how their claims may be reasonably satisfied. He wrote:—*

The parties directly affected are the people of India whose interests in the matter should be regarded as paramount; educated Indians; and Eurepean civilians.

The first and greatest "requirement" of the Indian people is that Indian public servants should, in reality as well as in name, be servants of the public, and not become its masters, usurping the control of the governing body in India. In England it is the settled rule that a member of the permanent Civil Service must be content to close his official career as the head of his department, without aspiring to political predominance. The task of a British Premier would be an impossible one if he were not free to choose the members of his Cabinet, and were compelled to accept as his colleagues the permanent chiefs of the administrative departments. And, similarly, the burden of a Viceroy in India, as the representative of Parliament and the Crown, will continue to be beyond human endurance, so

long as the heads of the great centralised departments can claim to sit as colleagues in the Viceregal Executive Council, holding portfolios which give them preponderating command over the administration. This fatal defect must be remedied as the first step towards placing the Indian public service on a right footing, and vindicating in India the authority of Parliament and the Crown.

As minor, but important, considerations, it is further the interest of the Indian people, as taxpayers, that they should not pay more than the market rate to their public servants; also that the public service should, substantially, be in the hands of Indians, who naturally are more in touch than foreigners can be with Indian feelings. Here, however, a note of warning is very necessary. It is not desirable that Indians should absorb the permanent Civil Service until the reform is accomplished which guarantees public servants being servants and not masters. Before the revolutions of 1848 every nationality in Continental Europe suffered grievous oppression from officials of their own race. In India official domination, as now existing, is unstable, because it is exercised by foreigners, but if the pick of Indian intellectuals are drawn into the official ranks, the bureaucratic yoke will be permanently riveted on the neck of the Indian people.

Prima facie educated Indians have a valid claim to all the appointments in the permanent Civil Service of their own country, the salaries being fixed according to ordinary market rates. The burden of proof lies on those who desire to import foreign agency at a fancy price.

The record of the European civilian, as a member of the permanent service, is a good one. He has done his work well and honestly, and has shown special devotion to duty in the dark days of war, pestilence, and famine.

Further, it must be borne in mind that his monopoly of high office, though imperfectly protected by statute, is the prize of success in an open competition, and constitutes an equitable claim in favour of present holders. The complaint is against the system, not against the individuals; and if, in the public interest, the prize is withdrawn, in whole or in part, present holders are entitled to suitable compensation.

The following practical steps are required in order to give effect to the reforms above indicated:

The constitution of the present Civil Service in India must be assimilated to the British model, future recruitment being subject to the following conditions: simultaneous examinations in India and in England; promotion limited to the headship of departments; salaries at Indian market rates.

Subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, the Viceroy and Provincial Governors should be free to select the members of their Executive Councils from among men of ripe experience in public affairs of East and West. Naming only the illustrious dead, who can doubt that the Cabinet of a Viceroy would be fortified and ennobled by the presence of such men as Sir Salar Jung, Mr. Justice Ranade, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale?

Liberal terms of retirement should be offered to civilians now in the service who are unwilling to accept the new conditions.

The operations of these changes would be gradual, they would inflict no injustice, and they include an element of finality.

INDIA OFFICE REFORM.*

THE COUNCIL OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN ITS PRESENT FORM.

On July 31st last Lord Crewe, in the House of Lords, announced his intention, as Secretary of State for India, of introducing reforms in the constitution and methods of his Council at Westminster. He referred to the Parliamentary debates in 1858, when it was settled that the full responsibility of the Secretary of State to Parliament should remain intact, and that the Council should be purely advisory, devoting its time to matters of policy and questions of first-class interest. These constitutional arrangements are to stand fast. But he declared that in practice the methods of conducting business at the India Office were "intolerably cumbrous and dilatory": legislation would be necessary in order to carry out the required reforms; he would bring in a Bill for this purpose in the coming session; and he would "welcome any criticism or any fresh ideas that might be brought forward."

THE PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED.

All who wish well to India must feel grateful to Lord Crewe for thus giving to the Indian public an opportunity of placing before him, and before Parliament, their views regarding the constitution and methods of the India Office in London, which is the ultimate seat of power. The Secretary of State in Council occupies the place of the Great Moghul, as the arbiter of Indian destinies; and, whatever his political creed, he has, on the whole, been regarded in

* Congress Green Book No. VI. 1st May, 1914.

India as a friend. But this feeling does not at all extend to his statutory councillors, who represent official influences; who have habitually resisted all enquiry into grievances; and who are regarded as the most formidable opponents to Indian aspirations. So hostile is the feeling in India that there has been a constant cry that the Council in its present form should be abolished altogether. But Lord Crewe has stated that abolition is not contemplated. What, therefore, the friends of India have now to do, is to make full use of the opportunity offered to them, and show how the Council, instead of working mischief, may be made the instrument of great benefit to India and to this country. We have first to consider what is the genesis of the Council as now constituted.

EARLY HISTORY,—THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, 1600 TO 1783.

Originally an association of merchant adventurers, trading under the protection of Charters granted by the British Crown, the East India Company acquired dominion over a territory greater in extent and more thickly populated than all the possessions of the British Crown put together. From being traders they became despotic rulers; and grievous complaints came to England as to the mode in which this rule was exercised by their servants in India. On account of these complaints two Parliamentary Committees, the one secret, the other open, were appointed in 1781 to investigate the whole condition of British India, as well as the affairs of the Company, which were then in a bankrupt condition. These Committees made elaborate reports, seventeen in number, all condemnatory of the Company's government, and disclosing transactions of great cruelty and oppression on the part of the high officials in India; and upon these reports the House of Commons passed resolutions for the immediate dismissal of

the Governor-General and the Chief justice of Bengal. The secret influence of the Court of Directors in Leadenhall Street was very great, and they fought hard to preserve their patronage and power, and to screen their servants in India. But the facts proved were too serious to be put aside; and, accordingly, the Company was placed upon its trial. Thus in 1783 the situation was as follows (vide "History of England under George III," by the Right Honourable W. Massey):—

> The company lay under accusation of having cruelly and scandalously abused the privileges of rulers. Their principal servants had been inculpated of gross malversation by a unanimous resolution of the House of Commons; and the Company had nevertheless upheld their officers in spite of the opinion of Parliament and of the Ministers of the Crown. The administration of justice had been so notoriously and scandalously abused that the Chief Judge had been dismissed, in spite of the Company, by the authority of the King's Government. Nor had the Company purchased material prosperity by the open violation of the principles on which civil government, nay, society itself, is based. Plunder and extortion had only relieved their immediate and temporary exigencies. The ordinary resources of India were unequal to satisfy the greedy adventurers who were spread over the land, and to maintain the military force which was necessary to support an arbitrary and iniquitous Government. The Company, therefore, came before Parliament as delinquents who had grossly abused their trust, and as bankrupts unable to perform their engagements.

EDMUND BURKE, FOX'S INDIA BILL, PITT'S INDIA ACT, 1783 AND 1784.

Such being the condition of affairs, India formed the most prominent topic in the King's speech in opening the autumnal Session of 1783; and a few days later Mr. Fox introduced his Bill to suspend the powers of the Company, and to bring the affairs of India under constitutional control. His plan was to erect a great Department of State which should be charged with the direction of the whole administration of India, all the political authority of the Company being transferred to seven Commissioners nominated in the first instance in the Act of Parliament,

and afterwards to be appointed by the Crown. It was in support of this Bill, of which he was the reputed author that Edmund Burke made his memorable speech on December 1, 1783. The two great facts with which Parliament had to deal were, the oppressions of the Company's servants in India, and the entire failure of the Court of Directors in England to check these iniquities. So far from controlling the officials in India, the Directors were on terms of intimate alliance with the offenders, supporting them during their career in India, and afterwards screening them from punishment when they retired to England to enjoy their ill-gotten gains. And the reason of this was not far to seek. For the East India Company being a joint-stock concern, it was open to anyone to purchase a share in its management. Under the constitution of the Company the directors were elected by the proprietors of India stock, so that by purchasing the stock the Indian officials and their friends were able to obtain a preponderating influence both in the Court of Proprietors and in the Court of Directors. Nominally the servants of the Company, they thus became its masters. It is easy to see how this arrangement suited the wrongdoers. By plunder and oppression they realised colossal fortunes in India, and invested a portion of this wealth in the purchase of India stock; thus securing the election of their own partisans as Directors of the Company. What chance of redress was there from a Court so constituted? Justice was thus made a mockery. For when complaints of oppression reached England, the hearing was before men who were the nominees and representatives of the delinquents. The object of the Bill was to strike at the very root of these evils, by ousting these unjust judges, and by establishing a real and independent control in England

over the Indian Executive. The control was to be a Parliamentary one, and it was to be exercised in a spirit of judicial impartiality.

Unhappily for India, and for England, Mr. Fox's Bill, after passing through the House of Commons in 1784 by a majority of more than two to one in every division, fell to the ground with the fall of the Ministry which originated it; and shortly afterwards Mr. Pitt passed his India Bill, by which the administration was still to be conducted in the name of the Company, the Court of Directors appointing the Governor-General and other officials in India, while the Crown directed the policy through the Board of Control. This uncouth compromise, known as "The Double Control," which continued the essential vices of the old system, was a mere makeshift, and was not designed for a permanent institution. But the force of political circumstances, little connected with Indian interests, prolonged its mischievous existence until the Mutiny of 1857, when the Crown assumed the direct administration under a Secretary of State in Council. And even then the change was one of nomenclature, not a principle. For the independent Parliamentary control, "exercised in a spirit of judicial impartiality," which formed the central feature of Mr. Burke's scheme, was not revived; and as regards the interests represented, the Council of the Secretary of State for India was little more than the old Court of Directors under a new name. This will be apparent when we remember that Mr. Burke's chief objection to the Directors was that they were the representatives of the Indian bureaucracy, which it was their duty to control. And exactly the same objection may be taken to the India Council, which is regularly recruited from the leading members of the Indian official class. In

fact, it may be said that the last state of the control is worse than the first. For, whereas the Court of Directors was filled with the nominees of the dominant Indian officials, the Indian Council is filled with these officials themselves.

GENESIS OF THE INDIA COUNCIL.—LORD PALMERSTON, MR. DISRAELI, AND SIR CHARLES WOOD.—1858.

It has been a grievous misfortune for India that the constitution of the supreme authority in England over Indian affairs was framed in 1858, when the Mutiny of 1857 was not yet quelled, when fierce passions had been aroused, and when "trust in the people" of India was at its lowest ebb. In previous legislation regulating the Government of India, there had always been some important change in the direction of progress: in 1813 the commercial monopoly of the East India Company was abolished, and in 1833 rights of equal citizenship were granted to the Indian people. But in 1858 there was no desire to make wider the bounds of freedom. On the contrary, the object was to give added power to the executive. As explained by Lord Palmerston, when introducing the first Government of India Bill, in February, 1858, the one great object was to abolish the "most inconvenient and most cumbrous" Double Control vested in the Company and the Crown, and to create an executive and powerful machinery of Government which would secure prompt and united action, and complete the suppression of the Mutiny. No administrative reforms in India were proposed: speaking for the Government, he said: "We wish to alter things as little as we can consistently with the great object we have in view."

But although, on account of the unfortunate conditions prevailing in India, no popular proposals were actually

put forward, still, even then, there evidently was a general desire to give the Secretary of State the best type of advisers, and to constitute the new Council in a way well suited to meet India's more modern requirements. Referring to the debates of 1858, which show the view then held by the great party leaders, we find that the selection of the Council *personnel* was the chief matter for consideration. Lord Palmerston, who introduced Government of India Bill No. 1, after stating that "the proposed Council must be a Council of advice, not a Council of control," proceeded to lay down the principle upon which (to use his own phrase) a sensible man would select his advisers, saying that the Government "would wish to be advised by those most competent to give advice, and so far from choosing those most likely to be subservient and flexible, they would, no doubt, deem it their duty, as well as their interest, to select those who, by their knowledge, experience, talent, and capacity, were most certain to prove useful assistants in the management of Indian affairs." Similarly, Lord John Russell favoured "everything that can be done to preserve an independent character to the Council." As in mechanics, so in political affairs: where there is no resistance, there is no support. And the same view was taken by Mr. Disraeli, who declared that the two great requisites for the Councillors were independence and knowledge. To these declarations Sir Charles Wood added, as the guiding principle, that "if we are to govern India it must be for the benefit of the natives of that country"; and this predicates yet another qualification—*viz.*, that the Councillors should be men prepared to make the welfare of India their first consideration.

THREE CLASSES OF COUNCILLORS.

It appears, therefore, that, according to the originators

of the Council, the essential qualifications for Councillors are devotion to Indian interests, knowledge of Indian affairs, and independence. Accepting this proposition as reasonable, what, under the circumstances of the present day, are the practical steps to be taken in order to secure the services of persons possessing these qualifications ?

There seem to be three classes from which Councillors may advantageously be drawn : (*a*) leaders of independent Indian public opinion ; (*b*) experienced Anglo-Indian administrators ; and (*c*) men unconnected with Indian administration, who have made their mark in English public life. Let us consider the qualifications of each of these classes.

As regards devotion to Indian interests, it stands to reason that this sentiment will ordinarily exist among the Indians themselves, and that its best exponents will be found among (*a*), those Indian leaders who are most trusted by the people. Also, as to special knowledge of Indian matters, we may assume that Indians are the persons best acquainted with their own affairs : their knowledge is at first hand ; and, as wearers of the administrative shoe, they alone can speak with certainty as to where it pinches. The remaining qualification, that of independence, could be secured in the case of Indians by adopting the plan advocated by Indian reformers, and approved in the Minority Report of Lord Welby's Commission, under which names would be recommended by the non-official members of the Legislative Councils in India.

The whole-hearted devotion to India which is natural to the patriotic Indian cannot be expected from (*b*), Anglo-Indian administrators as a class, their professional interests, as a close privileged body, enjoying a monopoly of place and power, being in many ways antagonistic to Indian

interests and aspirations. At the same time, it may rightfully be claimed that the best type of British officers, civil and military, have in the past made the welfare of India their first consideration. As regards knowledge of Indian affairs, they are competent as advisers, so far as the official machinery is concerned. But they are foreigners, with an imperfect knowledge of the languages; and, owing to the excessive amount of desk-work in which they are entangled, they seem in later years to have lost touch with the masses of the people.

By means of Mr. Fox's Bill of 1784, Edmund Burke desired to give the control exercised in England over Indian affairs to (*c*), a class of trusted public men, with ripe experience in Parliament, in the professions, and in business. The presence of such men, unconnected with the Indian administration, and trained in the wholesome atmosphere of British public life, is essential in the Council to act as mediators between the independent Indian representatives and the Anglo-Indian nominees, giving the support of their vote to the side which shows the best knowledge of the facts, and which appeals most effectively to accepted principles of justice and fair play.

Looking to practical requirements, it appears that each of these three classes, (*a*), (*b*), and (*c*), should be suitably represented in the Council of the Secretary of State for India.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

In an article entitled "British Democracy and India," published in the "Nineteenth Century" (February, 1911,) Lord Morley dwelt on the difficulty of the position occupied by the Secretary of State for India, looking to "the enormous weight, complexity, delicacy, and hazards" of our obligations towards India.

The difficulty is twofold, partly (1) permanent and unavoidable, viz., that arising from the magnitude and urgency of the questions to be dealt with; and partly (2) accidental and capable of a remedy, viz., that arising from the disadvantageous position of the Secretary of State, who personally is without Indian experience, and who possesses no machinery enabling him to deal with these questions on judicial lines, and full knowledge of the facts. As regards (1), it can only be said that the magnitude and urgency of India's claims will, doubtless, develop by means of the expanded Legislative Councils in India, thus adding to the burden of the Secretary of State. As regards (2), the first and most important step towards a remedy was taken by Lord Morley when he admitted Indians to the Council of the Secretary of State, thereby making it possible for him to learn the facts and the Indian view, at first hand, from Indians themselves. What is now wanted is to secure the full advantages of this reform, by carrying out the policy to its logical conclusions, and providing that the Indian Councillors shall be duly accredited to represent independent Indian public opinion.

To understand the situation it is necessary to consider (*a*) the nature of the questions coming before the Secretary of State, and (*b*) the existing arrangements for dealing with these questions:—

(*a*) The power of the Executive in India, in matters of administration, is absolute; and no question arises when the exercise of that power gives general satisfaction. The cases that come before the Secretary of State are those in which there is a complaint on behalf of some Indian interest, these cases being of the nature of an appeal to an

Appellate Court, against the decision of the high officials in India.

(*b*) In dealing with these cases the Secretary of State is dependent upon his Advisory Council for information and advice, and the members of that Council cannot be regarded as unbiassed, being recruited mainly from the class of high officials from whose decisions the appeals are brought. The points for decision are practically issues between independent Indian opinion and official authority; but in the Council official authority is altogether predominant, while independent Indian opinion is not represented at all. What is now needed is to redress the balance, and place the Secretary of State in a position to hear both sides with free access to the facts.

THE FRIENDLY CO-OPERATION OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE.

Owing to the exigencies of party government, the Secretary of State has seldom personal experience of India. How is he to deal successfully with the "enormous weight, complexity, delicacy, and hazards" of the responsibilities he bas to undertake? At a distance of 6,000 miles he is directly responsible for the well-being of a population exceeding 250 millions: his task under any circumstances is one of extreme difficulty; without the goodwill and co-operation of the Indian people it is an impossible one. Much that is unwise has been done to alienate the affections of a people naturally docile and law-abiding. But, happily for us in India, the Sibyl's books have not yet been burnt. There is still time to conciliate Indian feeling. A wise and patient people are still willing to co-operate with us in working for peace and progress, and promoting "the safety, honour, and welfare of His Majesty and his Dominions."

INDIAN NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS.

The two great national organisations which voice Indian sentiment and aspirations are the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League. Founded in 1885, the Congress has persistently shown its desire to co-operate with the Government, placing year by year, before the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, a series of resolutions showing, in loyal and moderate terms, what are the needs and grievances of the people, and how they can best be dealt with in practice. The Congress has now been joined in its action by the Moslem League, and these organisations, representing the great communities of India, are working together in harmony for the general good. At the sessions held last Christmas, at Karachee and Agra, both assemblies have responded to Lord Crewe's invitation, and submitted their views regarding India Office reform, appointing delegates to proceed to England and place their case before the Secretary of State and Parliament. I would specially ask attention to the reasoned statement on the subject in the address of the Hon. Nawab Syed Mahomed, a Mahomedan nobleman of the highest rank, and member of the Viceroy's Council, who was President of the Congress. Quoting the pronouncement of Mr. Disraeli as Prime Minister, and of Lord Stanley, who was responsible for the Act of 1858, he shows that it was their desire to introduce the representative element into the composition of the India Council, and they expressed their regret that the unsettled condition of the country (the Mutiny of 1857 was then barely suppressed) did not admit of a representation of the people of India itself. Lord Stanley explained that they were willing to introduce the elective principle "if it were only possible to find a fitting and satisfactory constituency."

A READY-MADE INDIAN CONSTITUENCY.

On this question of a constituency the Hon. Nawab points out that, under the reforms of Lord Morley and Lord Minto, the difficulty of providing an electorate has ceased to exist. The non-official members of the Provincial Councils in India have proved a perfectly satisfactory electorate in each province to return the elected representatives of the people to the Imperial Council ; and there is no reason why the Government should not avail themselves of these electorates as forming a proper constituency for returning members to the India Council in London. Accordingly, the Congress strongly urges on the Secretary of State that the total number of members of the Council should not be less than nine ; and that not less than one-third of that Council should consist of Indians chosen by the elected members of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils in India.

As regards the most convenient method by which the recommendation from India may be conveyed to the Secretary of State, it has been suggested that each group of elected Legislative Councillors should submit the names which they prefer, thus forming in the aggregate a panel from which the Secretary of State could make a selection with the assurance that he would thus have access to responsible Indian public opinion.

CONCLUSION.

Looking to the special qualifications, as advisers, of experienced Indians and the importance of the Secretary of State understanding the Indian point of view, it appears that the claim put forward on behalf of India is a very moderate one. The Indian share in the Council might well extend to one-half. In any case, India expects that the Liberal statesmen of 1914 will not allow themselves to fall

behind the Conservative statesmen of 1858 in recognising the need of adequate Indian representation. In perusing the debates of those past times, one is struck by the earnestness with which all parties in the House of Commons showed their interest in the welfare of India, Lord Palmerston declaring that all the improvements claimed by the East India Company had in reality been "the result of pressure on the Indian administration by debates in Parliament and discussion in the public Press." Let us hope that the Parliament and the Press of the new century will show no less zeal in fulfilling their duty towards the people of India.

THE DOUBLE OPPORTUNITY IN INDIA.

The following important letter by Sir William Wedderburn was published in the "New Statesman" on September 5, 1914:—

Just twenty years ago, in the spring of 1894, a great European war, such as now rages, seemed to be impending, and Allan Hume, the "Father of the Indian National Congress," in bidding farewell to India, addressed stirring words of exhortation to a great public meeting assembled in his honour at Bombay. If unhappily such a war broke out, and England was involved, he adjured the Indian people to give united and ungrudging support to the British people, "who, with all its defects, were a noble nation, that has ever sounded the advance to all the listening peoples of the world along the paths of freedom—the nation to which you owe most of what you now most highly prize." Indians should, he said, "rally as one man to the side of those little isles which have been justly

designated Freedom's last stronghold—Freedom's keep! Yes, in the nobler sense of the words, a great war will be India's opportunity—opportunity for proving that if in periods of peace she clamours—at times somewhat angrily—for equal civil rights, in the hour of war she is ever ready and anxious to accept equal military risks."

This appeal, instinct with the speaker's prophetic fervour, went straight to the hearts of the people, and the spirit thus evoked—the spirit which from the first has animated the Indian National Congress—manifests itself in the noble enthusiasm now inspiring a united India.

THE PART THAT ENGLAND MUST PLAY.

The tremendous crisis of to-day is indeed India's opportunity; but let no one forget that it is also England's opportunity. The writer of the article on "India and the War" in your last issue has rightfully signed himself "One who knows India," and British statesmen will do well to ponder his analysis of the Indian situation and be guided by his timely advice. The Indian expressions of loyalty to the Empire are sincere, but he warned the authorities that the country is very far from being satisfied with its political condition. Indians desire to maintain the British connection, but it is on the condition that the connection should be in accordance with royal and parliamentary pledges; that it should be a fair partnership, beneficial to both parties; that it should represent brotherhood, not subjection and exploitation.

As your correspondent has well shown, now is the psychic moment for a bold act of statesmanship, something that will show genuine sympathy and confidence. The disarming of the population, the rejection of Indians as volunteers, the withholding of commissions in the Army

from Indians (the cadet corps created by Lord Curzon exists unfortunately only for ornamental purposes), the harsh Press laws and laws against public meetings, the refusal to grant free and compulsory primary education—all such galling race restrictions are evidence of official distrust, of disbelief in the loyalty of the masses. What is now wanted is a declaration by the highest authority of whole-hearted trust in the Indian people, and this declaration in words must be accompanied by corresponding deeds, by sweeping away the whole fabric of distrust and repression, which is alien to British sentiment and destructive of goodwill among all classes of the Indian people.

No doubt, in some of these matters, such as primary education and Press laws, it may not be possible to take immediate action just now, and we may have to wait till the close of the war before the existing sense of wrong in the Indian mind is removed. But in regard to others, the very crisis which confronts us affords the most suitable opportunity for taking generous action. In particular I strongly urge the immediate adoption of the following three measures:—

A MODIFICATION OF THE ARMS ACT.

(1) A modification of the Arms Act. As your correspondent says, "It may not be practical politics to repeal the Arms Act at once, but there ought now to be no difficulty in beginning by exempting men of position and education from the operation of the Act, or by making the issue to them of licences to bear arms a matter of course." At any rate, the very least that ought to be done at once is to remove the element of racial discrimination from present arrangements by making licences equally necessary in the case of both Europeans and Indians, and granting them to

Indians of education and position in the same liberal spirit in which they will be granted to Europeans.

INDIANS AS VOLUNTEERS.

(2) The formation of Indian volunteer corps. The Government have very wisely decided to bring not only European troops but also Indian troops from India to reinforce the Expeditionary Forces, and it is possible that the bulk of the regular army in India may have to be so brought. The work of Indian defence will then fall on the Imperial Service troops of Feudatory States, a few thousand European volunteers and a few thousand Indian reservists. To my mind it will now be an act of the highest statesmanship to seize this opportunity to enrol carefully selected Indians as volunteers to join in the defence of their own hearths and homes, and thus remove from them what is at once a grievous disability and a great stigma.

INDIANS AS ARMY OFFICERS.

(3) The grant of Commissions to Indians in the Army. This important and far-reaching measure, strongly supported for many years by many of the highest civil and military authorities in India, has been very near adoption more than once during the last ten years. The late Lord Minto publicly stated a short time before his lamented death that this was a reform on which he had set his heart and he had hoped to see it carried through during his Viceroyalty, but that at the last moment some obstacle here at home prevailed, and his recommendations came to be pigeon-holed. I have also heard on excellent authority that Lord Kitchener and Sir O'Moore Creagh, chiefs of the army in India during the last twelve years, were both strongly in favour of this reform, and there was a general expectation in India that the historic visit of the present

King and Queen would be signalised, among other things by the announcement at the Delhi Durbar of this long awaited mark of royal confidence in Indian loyalty. Now that Indian troops will be fighting in Europe side by side with English troops against a common enemy of the Empire this measure of bare justice to the people of India ought no longer to be denied or delayed.

AN AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS.

A smaller matter—still one which will have an excellent effect on public feeling in India—is the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners. In this country Royal clemency has been extended to political offenders in connection with labour strikes and Suffragist agitation, and the opportunity should be taken to extend similar clemency to political offenders in India whose offences are unconnected with violence or moral delinquency.

Happily His Majesty the King-Emperor knows how to reach the hearts of the people, and his constitutional advisers should lose no time in moving him to issue such a gracious message to the princes and people of India. It will carry healing on its wings and hope in its bosom.

INDIA'S LOYALTY AND INDIAN ASPIRATIONS.

No one can doubt that if India had turned against us in the world crisis through which we are passing the great fabric of the British Empire would have been strained, even to the breaking point. Indeed, the position would have been serious if the response from India had been doubtful, or half-hearted; if there had been hesitation on the part of the Indian Princes, who command the hereditary allegiance of the masses, or of the educated class, who control advanced public opinion. Happily there has been no hesitation either among the thinkers or the fighters; and India has shown "a splendid and unswerving loyalty," placing personal service and her vast resources at the disposal of the King-Emperor.

If we ask why the Princes and People of India are eager to stand by England in this time of storm and stress, we find that it is because they believe that—whatever its shortcomings may be—the British Empire stands, on the whole, for freedom, toleration, and progress. But it would be fatal to assume that India is satisfied with her political condition, and that, as regards reform, the time has come to rest and be thankful. The blighting influences of official distrust must be put away for ever; we must boldly carry to its logical conclusions the doctrine of trust in the people; and India must be welcomed to an equal partnership in a free Empire.

A CONTINUING POLICY.

This is the only right—and the only safe—course to pursue; the only way to strengthen and perpetuaet the

existing good feeling. And the true note was struck by Mr. Charles Roberts when, speaking in the House of Commons on behalf of the Secretary of State, he said that "in the atmosphere of friendship and goodwill which unite England and India to-day there is surely a bright hope for the future, the common endeavour of these days will enable India to realise that she is occupying, and is destined to occupy, a place in our free Empire worthy alike of her ancient civilisation and thought, of the valour of her fighting races, and of the patriotism of her sons."

This forecast of a happy future indicates no fresh departure in British policy. The sentiments thus cordially declared towards India are those which in modern times have animated the best leaders of public opinion in this country: statesmen such as Edmund Burke, John Bright, Professor Henry Fawcett, Lord Ripon, and Lord Morley. And on these same lines the British people, by successive Acts of Parliament, and by Royal Proclamation, have ordained a continuing policy of justice and sympathy, abolishing all race and class disabilities, and conferring on Indians full rights of citizenship. In conformity with those principles, enlightened Secretaries of State and Viceroys have extended to India a share in free institutions: higher education, with colleges and universities; liberty of the Press, and of public meeting; and (by the Morley-Minto reforms) a certain instalment of self-government. All these progressive measures, and the policy which dictated them, have met with grateful acceptance throughout India by an intelligent and law-abiding people.

"UNREST" AND ITS REMEDY.

Looking to these favourable conditions, together with the *Pax Britannica* within our borders, and complete

religious toleration secured to all, how are we to account for the vehement discontent of which we have heard so much in recent years? What were the causes which brought about this "unrest" in every province of India, with its sinister by-products of secret conspiracy and outrage? The answer is not far to seek. There is nothing wrong with the guiding principles of Parliament and the Crown; and when, in the Indian administration, there has been loyal fulfilment of statutory obligations and royal pledges, peace and contentment have reigned. There has been trouble only when these obligations and pledges have been disregarded, in the pursuit of military adventure abroad, with police repression at home.

The remedy is to be found in a vigorous enforcement of the fundamental principles of British rule. But it is here that the difficulty comes in, for the execution of these progressive measures is in the hands of officials, whose professional interests are opposed to reforms which tend to limit their authority, and reduce their emoluments. The fault is not with the individuals but with the system, which has created in favour of foreigners a monopoly of place and power, thus establishing them in direct antagonism to the aspirations of educated Indians, who are competitors for high office, and who naturally desire to share in managing the affairs of their own country. Thus we find this curious condition of affairs that, as regards policy, the Indian people are in complete accord with the British Government; but the permanent Civil Service intervenes between them as a non-conducting body, rendering nugatory the orders of the King's Ministers on the one hand, and on the other hand, in India, repressing as seditious all manifestations of popular feelings. As his name denotes, the public servant should be the servant of

the public, not its master; but unfortunately in India the permanent Civil Service has usurped the mastery, thus creating a mischievous *imperium in imperio*, and proving the truth of the saying that the official, like fire, is a good servant but a bad master.

"TRUST IN THE PEOPLE."

As regards the comfort of the people in their daily life, the remedy must be sought in decentralisation, with the development of local self-government, and the employment of voluntary unpaid agency in the districts and villages. To secure the authority of Parliament and the Crown, the British system, which excludes permanent officials from the Cabinet, should be followed; and the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors should be provided with Executive Councillors from outside, with ripe experience in public affairs. In the India Council at Whitehall the Secretary of State is dependent for advice and information on retired members of the permanent service, and in order that he may be master of the situation, he should have on his Council a due proportion of Indians representing independent Indian public opinion.

While I write, the Indian National Congress is assembling at Madras for its annual session. Those members of the British public who desire to know what are the aspirations of educated India will find them detailed in the resolutions which have been passed by the Congress from year to year since 1885; and they will see that these resolutions are one and all in strict accordance with the declared policy of the British Government. As regards the European crisis, we shall now learn the considered view held by India's unofficial Parliament. What that view will be, no one in India doubts. It will be voiced by the President, Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, a

trusted member for many years of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, whose pamphlet, recently published in London under the auspices of the Victoria League, explains, in the words of the title, "Why India is Heart and Soul with Great Britain."

What we ask is, that the British people, being now convinced of India's loyalty, will give a fair and kindly hearing to India's aspirations.—*The Common Cause*, December, 1914.

AN INDIAN "ENTENTE."

The hearty goodwill manifested by India towards this country has profoundly impressed the British people. At a critical moment she has placed her vast resources unreservedly at the disposal of the King-Emperor. What can be done on our side, to confirm and develop this spirit of genuine solidarity between the two great branches of the Aryan race, bringing into permanent accord the best aspirations of the East and the West? We have an *entente* with France, with Russia, and Japan. But reasons more compelling exist for an *entente* with India, where our interests are far greater, and our responsibilities more direct. The events of the last few months have done the work of years in fostering cordial relations; and it appears that steps should now be taken, without delay, to establish a definite Indian *entente*, under wise leadership. The organisation of a society for this purpose presents certain difficulties. But friends, both here and in India, are prepared to make a beginning, however humble; a grain of mustard seed planted in the earth.

WHO SHOULD LEAD THE MOVEMENT.

Already various organisations are in existence having for their object to cultivate friendly relations with India; but these have mostly been formed for general purposes, under conditions now obsolete. New conditions have now arisen; and special action is called for, in order to dea with circumstances both unforeseen and extraordinary. It seems, therefore, necessary to reconsider the whole subject. Success must depend on two requirements; right direction and adequate support. How can these requirements be best secured? Looking to the most recent developments of public activity, it appears that special appeal should be made to the women of progressive sympathies, both here and in India, who in the last few years have organised themselves into powerful societies, and undertaken extended work for the general good. A fresh impetus would thus be given to existing movements tending to brotherly—and sisterly—accord.

If I may speak from personal experience of many years' uphill work for India, I would express my belief that this is the source from which the most fearless and effective aid may be obtained; and I would instance the extraordinary influence for good exercised by Miss Florence Nightingale in Indian affairs. A reference to Sir Edward Cook's admirable Memoir will show how this noble-minded lady was the adviser of Secretaries of State, while Viceroys and Governors conferred with her before proceeding to their duties in the East.

Accordingly, I should like to see women take the lead in this movement. Most men of altruistic inclination are already overburdened with work, and I would only bespeak from them advice and co-operation, leaving the entire management of the proposed society to women of light and

leading. If experience is lacking, that may soon be acquired, and, in any case, exclusive control tends to stimulate action, and quicken the sense of responsibility.

THE PRESENT ATTITUDE OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE.

In considering the programme of combined action by East and West, it is necessary to take into careful account the present attitude of the Indian people. We must realise that the determination of India to take her place as an integral part of a free and tolerant Empire is not the outcome of a blind or ignorant enthusiasm. It is the deliberate choice of a wise people, who see in the British connection the best hope of working out their national salvation—spiritual, social, political, and economic—in accordance with the cherished traditions of their ancient civilisation. India is waking up from the sleep of centuries: and questions of grave moment have come to the front: the destitution and illiteracy of the masses; the unfair position of women; the aspirations of the intellectuals; the claims of the dependent States. When peace shall have been restored, all our resources will be required to deal with such questions, and in the meantime it is necessary that public opinion should be educated, so that a right solution may be found. Most fortunately at this juncture, the direct administration of India is in strong and capable hands. India has full confidence in the good-will of Lord Hardinge and his colleagues in the several Presidencies. Further, at the head of the India Office we have a statesman of broad and sympathetic views. But in matters of Indian reform the impulse has always come in the past, and must come in the future, from outside. What is now required is to bring the best public opinion of India into effective touch with the best public opinion in this country; to obtain a wise initiative, we need com-

bined action between Indian leaders of experience, who can speak for the masses, and the democracy of England, which represents "the ancient and inbred integrity" of the British people.

HOW TO COMBINE EAST AND WEST.

There remains to consider the procedure of the proposed organisation. How can we best combine the activities of East and West? Each apparently has its special function to perform. On the one hand, the needs of India can best be made known by those who in India feel the pinch of the administrative shoe; on the other hand, those who are in England, near the seat of power, are in the best position to conduct an effective propaganda. Accordingly, the programme of reforms should be matured in India; while it is in England that the programme must be pressed on the attention of Parliament and the public. Such is the procedure adopted by the Indian National Congress, and this division of labour has worked well for the last thirty years. In India, by the work of the Congress, the consolidation of public opinion has been in great measure accomplished, and, broadly speaking, all Indian progressives are agreed as to the proper remedies for Indian grievances and disabilities. In England corresponding action has been taken, and "The British Committee of the Indian National Congress" was formed to carry on the progress propaganda. This Committee established its office in Palace Chambers, Westminster, near the Houses of Parliament: and in connection with its propaganda there was organised in the House of Commons an Indian Parliamentary Committee, including at one time over 200 members, pledged to attend to Indian interests, and to see that justice was done. Of this Committee Mr. John Bright was the first Chairman. Further

the British Committee established a weekly journal, "India" having for its object to place before the British public the Indian view of Indian affairs.

THE MODEL OF THE CONGRESS.

Such are the methods of the Indian National Congress, and there could not be a better pattern to follow. Already in India educated women possess societies and congresses of their own, and if these societies were developed and federated in a National Council, the initiative might be vested in that Council, which, among other duties, would formulate the special needs of Indian women, and determine what reforms were ripe for practical action. The corresponding society in England might bear to this National Council the same relation that the British Committee now bears to the Indian National Congress.

Undoubtedly there exists among Indian women a great fund of courage and capacity. From ancient times they have been distinguished in administration, in literature, and the sciences; and at the present day they are prepared to "fulfil the high traditions of Indian womanhood." A few days ago, over 1,000 Indian ladies of Bombay assembled under the presidency of Lady Mehta to do honour to the heroism shown by Mrs. Gandhi in South Africa; and in a letter addressed to that assemblage Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the Indian poetess, declared on behalf of her countrywomen that "the true standard of a country's greatness lay not so much in its intellectual achievements and material prosperity as in the undying spiritual ideals of love and service and sacrifice that inspired and sustained the mothers of the race." If these high thoughts of the East meet with response from the West, we may, even in these dark days, cherish a hope of peace on earth and goodwill among men.—*New Statesman*, March, 1915.

" RALLY THE MODERATES."

When Lord Morley declared that we should " rally the Moderates," he furnished the clue which should guide the British people in dealing with the Indian problem. But in other words, the injunction means that the safe path to follow is that indicated by our experienced friends among the Indian reformers, who realise that the interests of India and of the United Kingdom are identical, and who are willing and able to show us how satisfaction may be given to the reasonable aspirations of the Indian people.

In furtherance of Lord Morley's policy, an important step has now been taken by Mr. Chamberlain, as shown in a communication addressed by him to the American Press. He there claims that in the present world-struggle India is solidly with us, on moral grounds, because she has " a high sense of right and wrong." "The people of India," he said, " sepoys and maharajas, villagers and highly-educated public men, have given their support, because they are deeply convinced that in this war the British Empire is fighting in a just and righteous cause." And he singled out for special commendation the resolution of loyalty passed by the Indian National Congress at Bombay, under the lead of Sir S. P. Sinha, its " distinguished Bengali President." " This resolution of the Congress may," he said, " be taken as representative of the feeling of the great bulk of the Indian people."

THE TWO SETS OF " EXTREMISTS."

No doubt this is a correct diagnosis. But, at the same time, Mr. Chamberlain recognised that hostile influences

exist, and that among the younger generation of Indian patriots there are those who "believe that India is oppressed, and that the expulsion of the foreigner will bring the millennium." These are the Indian "Extremists," who, led astray by race prejudice, are opposed to reforms which may tend to strengthen the British connection. Similarly, Mr. Chamberlian might have pointed out that, led astray by race prejudice, British "Extremists" in India are opposed to Indian aspirations, seeking to keep India as a happy hunting-ground for official monopoly and commercial exploitation. These two sets of extremists are thus at one in hostility to the policy of sympathy and enlightenment prescribed by the King-Emperor, and desired by the British people. To such disloyal sentiments the best antidote is trust in the Indian people and cordial co-operation with their chosen leaders.

Not long ago a Cabinet Minister confessed to "colossal ignorance" of Indian affairs; and it must be admitted that British statesmen of the present generation have had little experience of Indian constitutional requirements. It seems, therefore, not inopportune to remind them of the sympathetic spirit in which their predecessors approached such questions, going no farther back than the Act of 1858, when the present form of Indian Government was established. In the Indian debates of that year, which extended from February to June, Mr. Disraeli declared that the object of his Government was "to draw nearer the relations between the inhabitants of Hindostan and England"; "to breathe a new spirit into our Indian administration and effect wholesome and regenerating measures," And he denounced the Governor-General who undertook great conquests, noting that Civil Servants in India "will support and assist him as long as he supports and assists

them." What was needed, he said, was Indian knowledge combined with English progressive opinion. Speaking on similar lines, Sir Charles Wood felt it his duty to rebuke the harsh and vindictive spirit towards the people of India manifested by English residents in Calcutta. Rather than be guided by such impulses he would prefer to quit the country: "If we are to govern India," he said, "it must be for the benefit of the natives of that country, and not to trample them under foot, and merely seek to find the means of employment for men and troops from this country." And similarly, Lord Stanley disclaimed all sympathy with the promoters of exploitation, those "whose object is to govern India for the benefit of the English in India, and of the English alone." The same sentiment was expressed by Lord Palmerston, when he said that our duty was not to provide for the British middle-classes, but to promote the instruction, the enlightenment, and the civilisation of those great populations which are now subject to our rule." There is no special mystery, he affirmed, in Indian affairs. What is wanted is "the vigilant supervision of Parliament"; and in the management of India the Government should give effect to the general principles of freedom and progress which form the permanent foundation of British policy.

These are the principles to which Indian reformers appeal when they claim an effective advance towards self-government. They rightly demand the fulfilment of pledges given by Parliament and by repeated Royal Proclamations; and it is for the British people to see that the people of India are treated as they would wish to be treated themselves.—*New Statesman*, June, 1916.

THE WAR AND INDIAN REFORMS.

The following communication was issued in November, 1916, by Sir William Wedderburn on behalf of the British Committee of the Congress :—

This year has essentially been one of anxious preparation. Both in India and in England, it has been fully recognised that, after the war, India should receive her due share of Self-Government, and should take within the British Empire, a place worthy of her ancient civilization and the high ideals of her people. Accordingly, during this year steady preparation has been carried on by Congress workers both in India and in England, so that, when peace is assured, proposals may be placed before Parliament for such constitutional reforms as will satisfy the Indian people, and be in conformity with British principles of freedom and progress.

From the nature of things, this work of preparation is necessarily carried on partly in India and partly in England. It is for India herself to mature a scheme of reform suited to her special requirements; it is in England, as the seat of power, that arrangements have to be made for the due hearing of her case. Congress workers in the East and in the West, have been diligent in the performance of this double duty.

WORK IN INDIA.

First, as regards work in India. By Resolution XIX of the last Congress, under the heading of 'Self-Government,' the All-India Congress Committee was authorised to frame a scheme of reform, having regard to the

principles embodied in the Resolution; and, further, it was authorised to confer with a Committee of the All-India Moslem League and to take such further measures as may be necessary. This action accords with the advice of Sir S. P. Sinha, the President of the Congress, who pointed out that, for the general welfare, we need 'a reasoned ideal of India's future such as will satisfy the aspirations and ambitions of the rising generations of India, and at the same time will meet with the approval of those to whom India's destinies are committed.' The representatives of the Congress and the Moslem League have met in conference as contemplated by Resolution XIX, ar d the final result of their deliberations is now awaited. There can be no doubt that the representations of a united India will receive from the British people the attention demanded by its importance for the welfare of the Empire.

Steps having thus been taken in India to formulate the wishes of the Indian people we have to consider the action required from friends in England. At the proper time when peace is within sight, it is proposed that the Indian scheme of reform shall be brought to England by a deputation of the most trusted Indian leaders; and the practical question is: How should this deputation proceed so that the case may be brought effectively before the Home Government, the Imperial Parliament, and the British public, with a view to a settlement beneficial alike to India and the world?

ACTION IN ENGLAND.

Naturally the first approach will be made to the Home Government. In the Government as now constituted, both the great parties in the State are united; and, fortunately, even before the Coalition the leaders on both sides pledged themselves, by declarations in Parlia-

ment, to a generous policy to India promising her a worthy place in our free Empire, as a partner, and not as a dependent. Mr. Charles Roberts gave this assurance, speaking for the Secretary of State, and Mr. H. W. Forster was authorised by Mr. Bonar Law to say how closely the Opposition associated itself with the sentiments expressed on behalf of the Government. Furthermore, the King-Emperor has repeatedly insisted on sympathy as the keynote in dealing with Indian aspirations. There is, therefore, every reason to expect that India's representations will be received by His Majesty's Government with careful and sympathetic attention and that the Secretary of State for India will receive the deputation in friendly conference, so that there may be a free interchange of views, having for its object to meet the reasonable wishes of all concerned. Proceeding on these lines, the way seems open for the Government, in consultation with India's representatives to prepare and place before Parliament proposals for such consititutional reforms as will satisfy the Indian people, and be in conformity with British principles of freedom and progress.

' From the above considerations there seems reason to hope that a satisfactory scheme of reforms may be framed by agreement. At the same time we must not shut our eyes to the fact that the Government may not see its way to grant all that the Indian representatives consider essential. Doubtless offers will be made, but in the Indian view these may not be sufficient. What, under the circumstances, is the wise course to pursue? How can it best be arranged to secure what the Government is willing to give, and at the same time to provide means of progressive improvement in the future? The

suggestion is that, if the Government proposals do not come up to India's expectations as formulated in the scheme brought by the deputation, the Government offer should be considered, with a view to acceptance as an instalment, the points of difference being reserved for submission to Parliament, on the report of a Parliamentary Committee, with a view to further legislation.

It will be for India's representatives to consider whether they should not ask for a revival by statute of the periodical Parliamentary enquiries which, up to 1858, originated all the most notable improvements in the condition of India. The recent action of the Joint Committee of both Houses in dealing with the Indian Consolidation Bill on sound judicial lines must give India confidence that such Parliamentary Committees will give a fair hearing to Indian claims, so that, from time to time, progress may be made in constituting India a free and prosperous partner in the British Empire.

THE ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLE.

The essential principle of self-government was declared by Lord Hardinge, when he indicated the safe path of Indian reforms, founded on provincial autonomy, with a persistent, if gradual, transfer of authority from the official body to the representatives of the people. This, we trust, will be the direction in which Parliament will proceed. But in order that the Viceroy may be in a position to carry out the orders of the Home Government, it is absolutely necessary that his hands should be strengthened. At present the Viceroy is not master in his own household, the existing practice giving to the permanent officials an exceptional position of authority in his Executive Council. The constitution of that Council is determined by the India Act of 1861 (24 and 25 Victoria, c. 67), clause 3

providing that three out of five ordinary members of that council are to be persons who have been at least ten years in the service of the Crown in India and this provision has been interpreted for the sole benefit of the Covenanted Civil Service; so that the Viceroy's 'Cabinet' is unduly dominated by a group of permanent officials, who enter the Executive Council automatically, imbued with the spirit of the great centralised departments, over which they have been accustomed to preside. Under this system a Viceroy, fresh from England and unfamiliar with the routine of Indian administration, is not in a position to give effect to the policy prescribed for him by Parliament and the Crown.

The remedy is a simple one; for the time has come to amend clause 3 of the India Act of 1861, by providing that the Viceroy, with the approval of the Secretary of State, shall have power to nominate the members of his own Executive Council from among men, British and Indian, of ripe experience in public affairs, their term of office ending with that of the Viceroy. Such amendment will only be an extension of the beneficial practice which for the last eighty years, have given to India the services of such men of mark as Lord Macaulay, Mr. James Wilson, Sir Charles Trevelyan, Sir Sumner Maine, Lord Hobhouse, Sir Courtney Ilbert, and Sir Guy Wilson. In more recent times the solidarity of the Empire has been strengthened by the addition of distinguished Indians: Sir S. P. Sinha, Sir Ali Imam and Sir Sankaran Nair. It appears that this reform is a condition, precedent to all other reforms. The principle involved is one that has been accepted by all civilised Governments. In England, especially, it has been the settled rule that a member of the permanent Civil Service

must be content to close his official career as the trusted and authoritative head of his department without aspiring to political governance. The task of a British Premier would be an impossible one if he was not free to choose the members of his Cabinet from among his political supporters and was compelled to accept as his colleagues the permanent chiefs of the administrative departments.

SIR KRISHNA GUPTA AND THE CONGRESS.

As regards a direct appeal to the Imperial Parliament and the British public on behalf of Indian self-government, the British Committee and the journal *India* have been working under difficulties, have lost valued colleagues, British and Indian, by death; while owing to war exigencies the Congress has not been in a position to supply their place. At the same time they desire to express their grateful thanks to Sir Krishna Gupta for his unfailing support and wise counsels. He is now returning to India, and his intimate knowledge of Indian affairs in this country will be of the highest value to Congress leaders in determining their action as regards proceedings in England. By a cordial and unanimous vote, the British Committee have elected Sir Krishna Gupta to be their Delegate at the Congress to be held this year at Lucknow.

In conclusion, the Committee would most earnestly urge Congress leaders to organize their resources of men and money, so that, when the great questions affecting the future of the British Empire come to be debated, the claims of India may receive full and fair consideration.

AN INDIAN CATECHISM FOR BRITISH ELECTORS.*

In the near future India's claim for a safe and reasonable advance towards self-government within the British Empire, will come before this country for decision; and it is of vital importance that the true bearing of the case should be generally understood. Fortunately, there is nothing in the facts that may not be understood of the people; for, however intricate the details of Indian administration may appear to the lay mind, the real issue is simple: the question is, whether, against the protest of united India, we should enforce a system of bureaucratic government, alien to British principles of freedom and progress; thereby alienating affection, and stimulating unrest; or, whether, reciprocating the goodwill and trust made manifest to the world by India in this crisis of our history, we should satisfy the reasonable expectations of a law-abiding and peace-loving people, thereby consolidating India, with her vast resources, as a tower of strength for the British Empire?

The main points for decision may conveniently be indicated in the form of a dialogue, between an enquiring British working man, and "Indophile," a person of experience in Indian affairs, who is in sympathy with Indian aspirations.

British Working Man—*Question No.* 1: The British people recognise their responsibility for the good government of India, and have every desire to redress grievances;

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* **Congress Green Book No. X. Reprinted from the "Contemporary Review," for April, 1917.**

but they have little opportunity of learning the facts. We hear of "unrest" in India, and stringent measures of repression; and we desire to know the cause of this unrest, and its remedy. It appears that according to Indian opinion the remedy is to be found in granting to India a liberal share in the management of her own affairs. Further, we are informed that a Deputation of Indian leaders is coming to England, in order to lay their case before the British Government, and the British people. Can you tell me what are the merits of India's claim?

"Indophile"—*Answer No.* 1: India's claim is, in its nature, a "Petition of Rights," addressed to the British nation as the High Court of the Empire: and her case may be briefly summarised in the following propositions:—(*a*) That by reason alike of their ancient civilisation, and their modern educational developments, the people of India are specially qualified to manage their own affairs; and the claim now put forward, on behalf of a united India, for an effective advance towards Self-Government within the Empire, deserves the most favourable consideration of the British people; (*b*) That the British connection has been highly beneficial in the past, by protecting India from external aggression, by maintaining internal order, by promoting unity among the various races, and by opening the way to further progress: but in the course of years, far-reaching changes have been developed in India's relations to the Empire, so that a system of government by foreign officials, operating through great centralised departments has ceased to be suitable to Indian conditions; and the time has come for a well-considered measure of progressive reform, which will bring the administration into harmony with modern requirements; (*c*) That the claim for reform is based upon successive Royal Proclamations,

and upon a direct pledge, given in Parliament with unanimous assent, that there will now be "a new angle of vision" in dealing with Indian affairs.

Question No. 2: Taking the first point, what are the political and social conditions which specially qualify India for Self-Government? British India is said to contain over 250 millions of inhabitants. Will it not be a task of practical difficulty to organise Self-Government for so vast a population?

Answer No. 2: Assuming goodwill, there is no real difficulty, whether we look to the masses of the population, the educated class, or the hereditary aristocracy. The frame-work of settled government, as affecting the units of administration—the Village, the District and the Province – is familiar to the Indian people from long ages; and their instincts are in favour of peace and orderly progress. For an advance, therefore, in Self-Government, no new official mechanism is required. All that is needed is to restore Indian organisation and develop Indian resources.

Taking, first, the masses of the people, it must be borne in mind that the urban population is comparatively small. In India there are few large cities, and four-fifths of the whole population are grouped in about half a million village communities, in size like an English parish; little self-governing republics, which have been the admiration alike of the historian and the economist. Sir Charles Trevelyan, a former Governor of Madras, in his evidence before the Select Committee of 1873, dwelt upon the extreme importance of these rural municipalities, and explained how by ancient habitude the Indian peasantry are specially fitted for the management of their own rustic affairs: "The foundation of Indian society," he said, "is the village municipality that has been the salvation of

India. One foreign conqueror after another has swept over India, but the village municipalities have stuck to the soil like their own *Kusa* grass, which they liken it to; it is a kind of grass which it is impossible to tear up by the roots, because it grows in bunches, and they say that the village constitution is like that grass." The Indian village has thus for centuries remained a bulwark against political disorder, and the home of the simple domestic and social virtues, conservative in the best sense of the word. Working under their natural leaders, the villagers can manage, in their humble way, every department of business required for their local wants:—land revenue, civil justice, police, communal forests and pastures, irrigation, public charity—all these were in the old times excellently well administered by the Patel or Head Man, acting according to custom, and with the advice of the village elders; and carrying out his orders through the hereditary village servants. In order to be prosperous and happy, all that the village communities ask from central power is to be protected from external violence; to be taxed in moderation, and according to custom; and to be let alone in the management of their internal affairs. Unfortunately, this last condition, to let well alone, is incompatible with an active official administration, framed on European models, and operating from distant headquarters through highly centralised Departments. These Departments (their name is legion)—Police, Forest, Excise, Public Works, Salt, Opium, Survey, Irrigation, Registration, Vaccination, and so forth—enforce their cast-iron regulations by means of a swarm of ill-paid and hungry subordinates, who dominate the villages, coercing the village authorities, and making the ryot's life a burden to him. So far, therefore, from needing any new official mechanism, the first requirement is to

emancipate the villages from the yoke of the Departments. All Executive authority should be withdrawn from the Departmental subordinates, the management of the village affairs being restored to the decent villagers themselves, working under the supervision of the District administration. In his Famine Report, Sir James Caird, an expert of the highest authority, describes the system of the village community as "the sheet anchor of Indian statecraft." And more recently, Lord Morley's Decentralisation Commission have shown how, on the secure foundation of the village community, an efficient representative administration may be built up for the District and the Province.

Next, as to the educated class. No one can doubt the extraordinary ability and moral grit of the Indian Intellectuals, who can send their sons 6,000 miles, over the "black water," to England, to compete successfully, in a foreign language, with the pick of British candidates. When in China many years ago, being myself among the early "Competition-Wallahs," I visited with interests the buildings at Canton in which were conducted the competitions (literary and physical) for admission into the hierarchy of the Mandarins; and on learning the particulars, the question forcibly suggested itself: "Had I been sent here to compete in the Chinese "language, what would my chance have been?" This reflection made one realise what it meant for an Indian to become a Senior Wrangler at Cambridge, and in London to head the list of candidates for the Indian Civil Service. So much for educational proficiency; and as regards administrative capacity, experience has proved the efficiency of the distinguished Indians who have held high and responsible office under the British Government, whether as members of the Viceregal and Provincial Executive and Legislative

Councils or as Judges of the High Courts of Judicature. In no case has public opinion questioned their high standard of excellence; and when a further move is made towards Self-Government, there will be a still wider choice of men trusted by the people for their learning and integrity.

Lastly, India has her Royal Houses, and her ancient aristocracy, which in past times produced rulers like Asoka and Akbar the Great, and administrators like Todar Mull and Sir Salar Jung. In modern times, the Ruling Princes in their own territories have been the pioneers of progress, affording an object lesson and example to the British Government by organising representative assemblies, and granting to their people free and compulsory elementary education.

Question No. 3: Next, as to the Deputation which India proposes sending to England. What will be its credentials, and programme? And how will it proceed to lay its case before the people of this country?

Answer No. 3: The initiative has come from the Indian National Congress, the great representative organisation which for the last thirty years has voiced the feelings and aspirations of the Indian people. At its thirtieth annual session, held in 1915 at Bombay, under the presidency of Sir S. P. Sinha, the All-India Congress Committee was authorised to frame a scheme for Indian Self-Government within the British Empire; and to confer with a Committee of the All-India Moslem League, with a view to joint action. The outcome of the conference has been a complete agreement between the leaders of the two great Indian communities; and a Joint Committee was appointed with power to make all the arrangements necessary to promote the cause of Self-Government. It is

under the instructions of this Joint Committee that, when peace is within sight, the Deputation of Indian leaders will proceed to London in order to plead the cause of united India. As regards procedure in England, it may be presumed that the first approach will be made to the Home Government as represented by the Secretary of State for India. It is understood that the Government are already prepared to make a certain advance, on the lines of the Morley-Minto reforms, in accordance with the policy of Lord Hardinge, who advocated Provincial autonomy, with a gradual transfer of authority from the official body to the representatives of the people. There seems, therefore, reason to hope that the Government, in conference with India's representatives, will be able to prepare, and place before Parliament, proposals for such constitutional reforms as will satisfy the Indian people, and be in conformity with British principles of freedom and progress. At the same time, it is possible that the Government may not see its way at once to grant all that Indian opinion considers essential. It is, therefore, suggested that if the Government proposals do not come up to India's expectations, the Government offer should be accepted as an instalment, the points of difference being reserved for submission to Parliament, on the report of a Parliamentary Committee, with a view to further legislation.

Question No. 4: Are there not classes in India out of sympathy with the Congress programme?

Answer No. 4: Yes. There are the Extremists of the national party, political and religious idealists, who believe that the presence of foreigners is a profanation of Mother India's sacred soil. These men, swayed by race prejudice, wish to get rid of foreigners altogether, and are hostile to Congress measures of reform, as tending to reconcile mal-

contents to British rule. These Extremists for the most part are young men, who have broken away from the control of their elders; and, representing a party of physical force, they have attempted military risings in certain parts of the country. Such attempts have been promptly put down; the action of the authorities being followed by repressive legislation of increased severity, arming the police with exceptional powers, and superseding the ordinary courts by special tribunals. These measures have been successful in quelling open resistance. But, on the other hand, they cannot be regarded as the right antidote for the poison in the body politic. On the contrary, irresistible military and police repression drives the disease below the surface, where it generates secret conspiracy, leading to brigandage and assassination.

Besides these declared revolutionaries, who are comparatively few in number, there is a considerable class, who are sometimes called Extremists, but who are far less extreme in their views and objects. They see the hopelessness of physical force, and disapprove of outrage. Further they agree more or less with the Congress aims as regards Self-Government; but they deny the efficacy of Congress methods, which depend on argument and memorials: they call this a "Mendicant policy"; and decry the results obtained by the Congress labours of thirty years. They advocate the boycott, and passive resistance, so as to make the existing system of official administration difficult, if not impossible; maintaining that the British Government never yields to mere reason and persuasion, and that this is the only way to obtain the attention of the British Democracy to the grievances from which India is suffering.

There is undoubted difficulty in dealing with both these classes of non-contents. But the wise course is to follow

the advice of Lord Morley, when he said, "Rally the Moderates"!—that is, strengthen the hands of our best friends, who still retain their faith in our justice and wisdom. To allay excitement and distrust, Government action is needed on broad lines of statesmanship. An authoritative pronouncement should, without delay, be made public, declaring that Self-Government for India within the Empire, is the ultimate goal of British policy; and at the same time cordial response should be made to the healthy and patriotic desire of Indians to share in the Empire's defence, as good comrades, and on equal terms; a response accompanied by such practical marks of trust and goodwill as will appeal to the imagination of the younger men, and bring them back to a happier view of India's future.

Question No. 5: As regards opinion in this country, from what quarter does opposition come; and what are the pleas put forward against India's claim for a reasonable share in the management of her own affairs?

Answer No. 5: In England, the Indian claim for an advance towards Self-Government necessarily clashes with powerful class interests. We cannot expect that the proposed reform will be welcomed by those who now enjoy a practical monopoly of official power and emoluments; but it is hoped that the rank and file of the Indian Civil Service will not, in this matter, be led astray by the Anglo-Indian Extremists who, in Parliament and the Press, support class privilege, and appeal to race prejudice. The details of the scheme entrusted to the Deputation may not as yet have been matured, but the main desiderata have been foreshadowed in the Memorandum submitted to the Viceroy by the nineteen independent Indian members of his Legislative Council, and to these proposals bureaucratic Extremists have already declared unqualified resistance,

objecting even to the hearing of the case, and demanding imperiously that such proposals shall be "promptly and finally rejected." But those who would refuse to India the blessings of Self-Government—blessings which we value so highly for ourselves—will have to reckon with the British Democracy, who have little sympathy with class privilege or race prejudice, and will not consent to India being exploited for the benefit of a small group of highly paid officials.

Further, the British people, in giving effect to vital principles of government, cannot blow both hot and cold, enforcing in the East what we reprobate in the West. On this point the Bishop of Madras uttered a timely warning in his article on "India after the War," in the *Nineteenth Century* of last August, pointing out that if it is wrong for Germany to impose her system of bureaucratic rule on unwilling nations, equally wrong is it for England to enforce such a system upon India against the will of the Indian people; "We cannot," he says, "fight for one set of principles in Europe, and then apply "another set of principles in India." And as a matter of British history and experience, bureaucratic rule has always proved a failure. Through bureaucratic ineptitude we lost the United States of America; and it was only by the grant of Self-Government that our great colonies were preserved to us. Now, the merest commonsense demands that we should extend to India's peace-loving, intelligent, and loyal population a generous measure of that Self-Government which, under circumstances of difficulty and discord, brought peace and brotherhood to Canada, Australia, and South Africa.

You have further enquired, what are the arguments put forward by the opponents of India's claim? Originally,

it was urged that Self-Government could not be granted because it was not desired by the Mahomedan community, but this plea fell to the ground, and was abandoned, when the All-India Moslem League gave its cordial support to the Congress proposals. Now, in support of the present system, a new and curious claim is brought forward, *viz.*, that the permanent Civil Service, manned by foreigners, is a better friend of the masses, and understands the ryot's requirements better, than the Indian National Congress, whose members are elected freely, in all the provinces of India, by every caste and creed. Cogent proof is required to establish so fantastic a proposition. But as a matter of fact, the evidence is all the other way; for the two great calamities from which the Indian masses are suffering, are, destitution and illiteracy; and a reference to the public records will show that the practical schemes for relief have come from the Congress side, and the opposition in each case from the official body. Thus, for the relief of the ryot from his hopeless indebtedness to the money-lender, schemes were matured by educated India for Agricultural Banks and Arbitration Courts; but after a prolonged struggle, extending to debates in the House of Commons these proposals were crushed by the authorities. Even enquiry into the facts of the ryot's condition was refused, as in the case of the Indian Famine Union, whose memorial to the Government demanded an economic enquiry in typical famine villages; although the memorial was supported by the signatures of Archbishops and Bishops, Members of both Houses of Parliament (including an ex-Viceroy), Mayors and Provosts of great cities, Heads of Colleges, and the Chairmen of Chambers of Commerce and County Councils. Then, as regards any official claim to be apostles of enlightenment to the Indian masses, we

have the crucial case of Mr. Gokhale's Bill for free and compulsory elementary education, which was supported by the independent Indian members of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, but was refused a second reading by the official majority. Surely here it was the educated Indians who showed themselves the good Samaritans towards the masses; for what can be a more piteous figure than the agricultural labourer in India—landless and untaught:

> Bowed with the weight of centuries, he leans
> Upon his hoe, and gazes on the ground,
> The emptiness of ages in his face,
> And on his back the burden of the world.

Question No. 6: Do you maintain that the members of the Civil Service have failed in their duty to the people of India?

Answer No. 6: No; I have no complaint against the *personnel* of the permanent Civil Service. So far as these public servants have truly been servants of the public, their record has been excellent. There has not, I believe, existed in any country a public service more capable, industrious, and trustworthy; and in times of war, pestilence, and famine, they have shown a devotion beyond praise. The complaint is not against the men, but against the system, which has placed them in a false position, making them masters where they should be servants. An *Imperium in Imperio* has thus been created at Simla so that the permanent Civil Service, a privileged foreign body, with professional interests adverse to Indian aspirations, dominates the administration, and intervenes, as a non-conducting medium, between the good will of the British Democracy and the reasonable claims of the Indian people.

This bureaucratic dominance depends for its authority on Clause 3 of the India Act of 1861 (24 and 25 Victoria

c. 67), which provides that three out of five ordinary members of the Viceroy's Executive Council are to be appointed from among persons who have been at least ten years in the service in India of the Crown; and this provision has been interpreted for the sole benefit of the Covenanted Civil Service; so that the Viceroy's "Cabinet" s unduly dominated by a group of permanent officials who, mainly by virtue of seniority, enter the Executive Council automatically, imbued with the spirit of the great centralised departments, over which they have been accustomed to preside. Under this system a Viceroy, fresh from England, and unfamiliar with the routine of Indian administration, is not in a position to give effect to the policy prescribed by Parliament and the Crown. Further, this mischief of official predominance extends to the India Office at Whitehall, and to the House of Commons; for, by a process of co-option, the Council of the Secretary of State is regularly recruited from retiring members of the permanent Civil Service; so that the Secretary of State, who rarely has personal experience of Indian affairs, hears only the official side of the case, and is not in a position to decide judicially when exercising his authority in the House of Commons, where he commands a party majority whatever the political complexion of the Government may be. The simple legislative remedy (a condition precedent to all other reforms) is to withdraw from the official class the exceptional privilege which, half a century ago, was created by Clause 3 under very special circumstances which have long ceased to exist. Such an amendment of the law will bring the Indian Executive into conformity with the settled rule in England—a rule common to all civilised Governments—that members of the permanent Civil Service do not enter the Cabinet, but must be content ta

close their official career as heads of the great Departments without aspiring to political control.

Question No 7. : If you offer yourself as a witness in support of India's claim, will you state what has been your practical experience of Indian affairs ; and what have been your opportunities of knowing the aims and objects of the Indian leaders ?

Answer No. 7 : Belonging to a family which has served India for three generations, I entered the Civil Service in 1859, and passed through the official mill in the Bombay Presidency, serving in the Revenue and Judicial branches, and in the Secretariat, where as Chief Secretary, I was in charge of the Political, Judicial, Secret, and Educational Departments. After retirement from the service, I obtained a seat in Parliament, and was elected Chairman of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, which owed its origin to Mr. John Bright and at one time numbered over 200 members of the House of Commons. On two occasions I had the honour to act as President of the Indian National Congress, being unanimously elected, at Bombay in 1889, and at Allahabad in 1910 ; and as Chairman in London of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, I have for the last thirty years maintained constant communication with the Indian leaders in the different Provinces, seeking to make known in England the Indian view of Indian affairs. From personal knowledge I can affirm with absolute certainty that the aims and objects of the Indian leaders are simply and solely to promote the welfare of India, to revive her ancient glories, and to obtain for her a worthy place as a partner in a free, tolerant, and progressive British Empire. It is to be hoped that the British people will rise to the height of the occasion. The problem is a simple one : Trust the people ; and India will become the biggest asset in the world for the cause of peace on earth and goodwill towards men.

POST-WAR REFORMS IN INDIA.

[*The following letter from Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., was published in the " Nation " of November* 11, 1916.]

I trust that all members of Parliament will read with care the Reform memorandum submitted to the Viceroy by the elected Indian members of his Legislative Council. It is a remarkable document, breathing a spirit of reasoned loyalty to the British Empire, with a hearty desire to promote " an advance in the ideals of government all over the civilised world."

This manifesto of Indian aspirations recognises ungrudgingly the benefits of a British connection: " The people of India have good reasons to be grateful to England for the great progress in her material resources and the widening of her intellectual and political outlook under British rule, and for the steady, if slow, advance in her national life, commencing with the Charter Act of India of 1833." Further, India cordially appreciates the advance made in recent years by the Morley-Minto reforms, which, especially as regards the Executive and Legislative Councils, gave the Indians a certain voice in the management of their own affairs. The time now seems to have come for a further development on similar lines.

Up to the reforms of 1909 the members of the Executive Councils were all Europeans, the majority being officials belonging to the permanent Civil Service; and the Morley-Minto reforms promoted Imperial solidarity in no small degree, when they mitigated this racial monopoly, and admitted into " the inner counsels of the Indian

Empire" Indians of such character and attainments as Sir S. P. Sinha, Sir Ali Imam, and Sir Sankaran Nair. As regards the Legislative Councils, the object of the reforms was to extend the elective system and obtain for the administration the benefit of independent Indian opinion, allowing to the wearer an opportunity of saying where the shoe pinches him.

What is now the position? India has borne her part in the great world-struggle, and now looks forward to a happier future: "Expectations have been raised and hopes held out that, after the war, the problems of Indian administration will be looked at from a new angle of vision." We hope and believe that these expectations will not be disappointed. Leading British statesmen have declared their desire to satisfy reasonable Indian aspirations; and it is most opportune that a body of trusted leaders representing united India (three of the signatories are ex-Presidents of the Indian National Congress and three are ex-Presidents of the Moslem League) should have placed before the Viceroy a statement showing in clear terms the reforms which in their judgment are essential for the welfare of India and of the Empire: "We feel," they say, "that we should avail ourselves of this opportunity to respectfully offer to Government our humble suggestions as to the lines on which these reforms should proceed."

Accordingly, as regards the Executive Councils, Imperial and Provincial, they recommend that half the members should be Indians; and that the European members should be men trained and educated in the public life of England. As regards the Legislative Councils, they propose that in all cases there should be a majority of elected members, the Viceroy and Governors retaining their power of veto. Further, it is suggested that the

elected representatives of the people should have a voice in the selection of the Indian members of the Executive Councils.

These are some of the leading proposals tending to produce that atmosphere of sympathy desired by the King-Emperor. But, apart from constitutional reforms, there exists at the present moment a crucial matter, connected with the military situation, which demands special attention from well-wishers of the British Empire, because it intimately affects the sentiments of the Indian people, and is derogatory to their sense of national self-respect. A humiliating sense of racial differentiation is produced by the Arms Act, applied to Indians, but not to Europeans and Anglo-Indians ; by the disqualification of Indians as volunteers ; and by their exclusion from the commissioned ranks of the Army. With pathos these representative members of the Viceroy's Council set forth the demoralising effect of such restrictions on the civil population of India, and especially on the younger generation ; and they urge that the Government should remove these " irritating disabilities as regards the possession of arms and a military career, which indicate want of confidence in the people, and place them in a position of inferiority and helplessness."

India is a lover of peace, but she possesses almost unlimited man-power and her desire is to have her hands unbound, and, as a good comrade, to stand by England in securing victory for " the cause of justice and humanity in the international relations of the world."

REPLY TO LORD SYDENHAM.

[*The following is Sir William Wedderburn's reply to Lord Sydenham's letter in the " Times " of the 6th Dec.* 1916, *published in the columns of the same journal in its issue of the* 9*th December* :—]

Lord Sydenham takes exception to a leaflet, entitled " India's Loyal Aspirations," which I have circulated to members of Parliament. I enclose copy of this leaflet, from which it will be seen that its object is to draw attention to a Memorandum in which 19 elected members of his Legislative Council have indicated to Viceroy the " post-war reforms " which, in their judgment, are essential for the welfare of India and the Empire. It seems desirable that Parliament should give careful consideration to this document, which (whatever may be its merits or defects) expresses the views of the " moderate " reformers, who are the best friends of the British connection.

Lord Sydenham demurs to my statement that " expectations have been raised and hopes held out " to the Indian people. But he seems to have forgotten the authoritative declarations made in Parliament regarding a new " angle of vision," when Mr. Charles Roberts, speaking for the Secretary of State, advocated a generous policy towards India, which would give her a worthy place in our free Empire, as a partner and not a dependent; while Mr. H. W. Forster was authorised by Mr. Bonar Law to say how closely the Opposition associated itself with the sentiments expressed on behalf of the Government.

I agree with Lord Sydenham (see his article in the ' Nineteenth Century ") that we should make clear to

India and the world the contrast between British love of free institutions and the harsh repressiveness of Prussianised militarism ; and this object can best be attained by extending to India's peaceful, intelligent, and law-abiding population a substantial measure of that self-government which, in circumstances of difficulty and discord, brought peace and brotherhood to Canada, Australia, and South Africa.

STATE OWNERSHIP OF THE DRINK TRAFFIC.

Some good friends of temperance are inclined to favour State purchase of the drink business, honestly believing that the people will benefit if the Government takes this sinister trade into its own hands. Are there reasonable grounds for this belief ? The idea of the Government becoming the purveyor of drink to the people is repugnant to the moral sense. But taking State purchase as a suggestion based on expediency, we must ask : Is there reason to believe that management by a State department will promote temperance by restricting consumption ? Will such management readily give effect to a popular demand for Local Option, or Prohibition ? Can an Administration hard pressed for ways and means be trusted to resist the temptation of a great and growing revenue, easily collected by well-organised official machinery ?

To obtain an answer to these questions we have the experience of India, where State ownership has existed for many years, the profits of the drink monopoly going

to the Government. Has this system promoted temperance? Has it commended itself to the approval of the Indian people? No, it has not. For half a century, on behalf of the people, temperance reformers in India have protested against this system, carrying on an uphill struggle against the policy of the Excise Department. And as illustrating the consequent attitude of the Government itself in this great controversy, I would invite attention to the proceedings of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association, which recently held its twenty-ninth annual meeting in London, and reported the results of the temperance propaganda carried on by its two hundred affiliated societies in the various provinces of India.

The whole history of the controversy shows that the temperance propaganda—the demand for restriction and local control—comes from the Indian people, and that the Government, acting through its revenue-collecting department, is practically the sole opposing force. For it must be borne in mind that in India the conditions which make for temperance are much more favourable than in this country. In India there has never existed a powerful capitalist class with a vested interest in the sale of drink; there is no national habit of drinking; and no tradition of State complicity in purveying intoxicants. On the contrary, public opinion is all the other way.

The use of intoxicants is forbidden by the religious law alike of Hindu and Moslem, and is disapproved by all sections of society: equally obnoxious is it to the old-time orthodox and to the modern reformers, who year by year in the Indian National Congress record a resolution in favour of restriction and local control. The action in this matter of a Government professing high ideals appears altogether incongruous to the Indian mind; for whereas

pre-British days the sale of drink was irregular and contemned, it has in modern times been given State recognition, British Government officials selling liquor shops by auction to the highest bidder; so that the Excise Department has now become one of the most lucrative revenue collecting agencies of the State. The amount received from the liquor monopoly has increased from £3,721,000 in 1900-01 to £8,498,000 in 1915-16. Twenty years ago the revenue derived from drink was 19 per cent. of the total proceeds of taxation; it is now 32 per cent.

No one denies that in a general way the Government desires to combat intemperance; but it has accepted the services of the Excise Department—a Frankenstein monster of its own creation—and is now powerless in its hands. Under these conditions the position of our rulers in India is painful and humiliating. They profess a hearty desire to reduce intemperance, but through their officers they discountenance the efforts of temperance workers, and themselves accept large profits from the drink trade, which India regards as the wages of sin. As in the case of the Apostle Paul, to will is present with them, but how to perform that which is good they find not. For the good that they would they do not, but the evil which they would not that they do.

Looking to these considerations, friends of temperance in this country should beware of countenancing the expenditure of public money in creating a system which places the Government in a position of direct antagonism to temperance reform. Experience in India shows that State ownership is no remedy for intemperance, and that the Government cannot be trusted to deal with this great national evil in accordance with the higher aspirations of the people.—The *Good Templars' Watchword*, August, 1917.

INDIA REVISITED.

The phenomenon which, from the political point of view, struck me most on my return to India, after an absence of 15 years, was the extraordinary expansion and solidarity of Congress opinion throughout the country. It has been for some time admitted that the movement which the Congress represents has taken firm hold of the educated class; but it has been the cherished allegation of our opponents that the movement is viewed with indifference by the other classes of the community. Even if this were the case, it would not prove that the movement was not a truly national one; for in every age and in every country active reform has been the work of the few; and especially might this be expected in India, where the caste-system favours division of labour and the literate class does the political thinking for the rest of the community. But what I have seen in India, on this occasion, goes far to show that Congress ideas now permeate the masses, and that under the lead of the educated class, they have become the property alike of the trader, the artizan, and the cultivator.

As evidence of this expansion of Congress feeling, both in width and in depth, I would refer to the spontaneous and unexpected demonstration accorded to Sir Henry Cotton and myself in Bombay, as we passed through the commercial and industrial bazaars of the great city. The organised reception on the Apollo Bunder, where we were met by the leading citizens of Bombay, was most gratifying; that was the welcome of

personal friends and political fellow-workers. But it was clear from what happened in our progress through the city that the enthusiasm was not confined to the classes usually interested in political affairs. For the excitement had evidently spread to the " man in the street ": the long bazaars were decorated with flags and streamers, inscribed with words of welcome and approval; bands were playing; the windows and balconies were packed with women and children; the streets were thronged with cheering crowds of shop-keepers, mill-hands, and coolies; the tramcars were stopped by the passengers, in order to add their friendly outcry; flowers were showered on our heads from suspended baskets; while the procession was brought to a halt again and again, for garlands to be placed round our necks, till there was almost a danger of suffocation. Now I was informed by friends that according to the original programme of the Reception Committee we were to have proceeded direct to our bungalow at Malabar Hill by the sea road, and it was almost at the last moment that the route was changed to the city in order to meet the general wish. Similar manifestations of popular feeling attended Sir Henry Cotton's visit to the Bengal side; and I had the same experience in the Madras Presidency, though personally unknown to the people there. Not only was this the case at Madras, and in the great towns of Madura, Trichinopoly, and Tanjore; but as I travelled through, during the night, I was continually called up at the halting places, to meet deputations of the local villagers, and receive at their lands addresses and garlands of flowers.

In all these demonstrations the note struck was always the same: gratitude and approval for work done in

the Congress cause, as being the cause of the people. The solidarity of opinion throughout the country was reflected in the unanimity which prevailed in the vast Congress tent in Bombay, where during three days the resolutions were discussed, and passed, without a dissentient voice, by 1,200 freely elected delegates from every province of India; passed, also, before an audience of 12,000 interested and applauding spectators. Could such a spectacle of political unanimity among independent thinkers, be witnessed in any other country in the world? I think not. In any case it could only be possible amid a civilized and law-abiding population, acting with discipline under their leaders, and confident in the ultimate triumph of constitutional methods. Such an object-lesson of organisation, self-restraint, and moderation should satisfy the British public that the Indian people are ripe for a large share in the management of their own affairs.

Having thus realised the wide expansion and solidarity of Congress opinion, let us consider what is the central idea of the movement? If we carefully study the Congress resolutions, we shall find that they all point to one main consideration, the condition of the agricultural masses. Upon the welfare of the peasant cultivator depends the prosperity of all India. The one great question, therefore, is how can he be protected from famine and pestilence? How can he be made happy and prosperous? Everything depends upon the answer given to this question. And it is here that the irreconcilable difference of opinion arises between the official and non-official view of the situation; between the Government and the Congress. The Government view is that the cultivator is prosperous; the Congress view is that he is ruined; the Government view is that the official system of centralised departments is the cause of his

prosperity; the Congress view is that this same system is the cause of his ruin. Here is a clear issue of fact; and the prayer of the Congress is that this issue should be tried and determined. Is the cultivator prosperous or is he ruined? What we now ask for, as a preliminary step, is a detailed economic inquiry, by an impartial authority, into the condition of a few typical villages; an inquiry after the fashion of that conducted in London by Mr. Charles Booth, and in York by Mr. Rowntree. But this inquiry the Indian Government is unwilling to face. Lord Curzon will not allow it to be made, although it has been demanded by the *Indian Famine Union*, backed by a memorial signed by leading representatives of every influential class in the United Kingdom.

The situation is, indeed, a strange one. On the one hand, we have Indian public opinion represented by the Congress, quite solid, but destitute of political power; on the other hand, we have Lord Curzon at the head of the all-compelling official autocracy. The Congress says that India is suffering; Lord Curzon says, "No, she is happy and prosperous;" and here the matter must stand until inquiry is made, and the facts determined. It is the old dispute between the wearer of the shoe and the maker. The wearer says, "the shoe does not fit; it galls me; I am crippled, and cannot walk; please examine my foot, and you will see that this is the case." The official shoemaker is indignant that such complaints should be made. He knows what a superior person he is, how skilled a workman, how kindly intentioned. He, therefore, refuses all inquiry; and explains to the British public that these complaints must be unfounded, as his workshop and his work people are the most meritorious that the world has ever seen.

Such is the present situation. But it cannot last. Inquiry cannot be indefinitely postponed; and truth will out in the end. Time is on our side: also the British people, who have now returned to sanity, after a bad fit of Birmingham Imperialism. They are now clothed and in their right mind; and in the mood to realise, as regards India, that no one knows where the shoe pinches except the wearer.—*Indian Review*, March, 1905.

PART V.
PERSONALIA.

BABU SURENDRANATH BANERJEA.

[*At Westminster Palace Hotel, London, on June* 29, 1909, *Sir William Wedderburn, in proposing the toast of the guest, Mr. Banerjea, said :—*]

Gentlemen, our guest, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, is a many-sided man—a journalist, an educationist, and a political agitator. But this morning we welcome him specially as a personal friend, one whom we have known and admired for many years. I have said he is a many-sided man. As editor of the "Bengalee" he is recognised as a trustworthy journalist; as founder and head of the Ripon College he is appreciated as a brilliant educationist. But perhaps I may say a word regarding him as a political agitator. Some people regard all agitators as mischievous persons. But that is too wide a generalisation. You should remember the angel at the Pool of Bethesda. He was an agitator, he troubled the waters, but the result was good, not bad; the result was the healing of the sick. Such an agitator is our friend Mr. Surendranath Banerjea. His mission is one of healing, to promote peace and goodwill between India and England.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON.

During my time I have come in close contact with three of our leading public men now all deceased, who were of the salt of the earth: Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Marquis of Ripon, and Sir Wilfrid Lawson; personalities differing in temperament, but alike in their grasp of principles, and pure unselfishness. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was a familiar friend of my brother Sir David at Trinity College, Cambridge, so I knew him from early years; high office had no deteriorating effect on that kindly Scot; he always remained the same, with his pawkie humour, and shrewd practical good sense. The friendship of Sir Wilfrid Lawson was also a legacy from my brother, who in the House of Commons had always stood by Sir Wilfrid in his temperance crusade. Of Lord Ripon I had known little until 1880, when he landed at Bombay, but he had no sooner put foot in India than the Indian people recognised his quality as a good and just man; they were sure that he would prove their friend, and he justified their estimate, as the best Viceroy that India ever saw. The existence of such men, who are to a certain extent typical of the national character, may give hope to those who are inclined to despair of benefit to India from the British connection. "Spite of despondence and the inhuman dearth of noble natures," we may look for better things both for India and for Britain if, disregarding the accidental separations of geography and race, those who love righteousness, in the East and in the West, realise the true bonds of brotherhood, and work together intelligently for the common good.

I have now before me Mr. G. W. E. Russell's *Memoir of Sir Wilfrid Lawson.* It was published last year, and in ordinary course reviews appeared in several journals. But I will ask the *Hindustan Review* to provide in its pages a more permanent record of some of the lessons which may be learned from this noble and strenuous life. Young India will find in his career a line of conduct worthy of imitation: the early selection of a guiding principle; the unrelaxing hold on a definite course of action; and a cheerful patience under hope deferred during long years. Sir Wilfrid Lawson's motto was, "hope everything, expect nothing." He realised "the tremendous powers that are always at hand to prevent anything being done," but this never daunted him. Failure brought no discouragement; to him it was only the strongest possible argument for trying again.

It was in 1864 that Sir Wilfrid first brought in his Permissive Bill. The rules of the House require that the name of at least one other member should appear on the back of a Bill, and Sir Wilfrid found great difficulty in getting any one to give his name for so unpopular a measure. At the second reading the Bill was thrown out by 292 against 95. He had long to wait and many battles to fight, but before his death in 1906, Sir Wilfrid saw the Temperance cause approaching its triumph. He had a glimpse of the Promised Land, though he did not himself enter it. Never during these long years did his purpose falter, either as to principle or mode of action. Drink he held to be the poison which was destroying the people; what Lord Randolph Churchill called "the devilish and destructive drink traffic." And the antidote was to be found in local veto, in giving to the people the power to protect themselves. To us who have to wait long for reforms such

tenacity of purpose is both an example and an encouragement.

Though his shrewdest blows were dealt at Drink, he was equally a foe of militarism and of oppression, whether exercised in Ireland, in South Africa, or in India. And here we find an illustration of his moral courage, of his utter disregard of consequences when a question of principle was at stake. It was in the darkest times of South African war. As a prominent "Pro-Boer" even he had been defeated, in his old constituency at the "Khaki Election" of 1900: to use his own words, the general idea set afloat by the (Tory) Government, inspired by Mr. Chamberlain, was that every one who objected to shooting Boers, burning their houses, and devastating their farms, was a "traitor." And this cry was successful against Sir Wilfrid. But in 1903 a vacancy occurred at Camborne, owing to the lamented death of Mr. W. S. Caine, and Sir Wilfrid was invited to contest the seat. At the instance of the "Eighty Club," I went down to Cornwall to help in the election, and was a witness of his brilliant campaign. Anticipating the wise and successful policy of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in 1906, he had, before the vacancy occurred, advocated a form of Home Rule for the Transvaal; and frantic appeals were consequently made to patriots to rend him in pieces. Some advisers thought that in this matter he should bend to the storm. Not so, Sir Wilfrid. In uncompromising terms he re-affirmed his views of what he considered just, and to the surprise of timid friends, the sturdy Cornishoners applauded wildly; and sent him to Parliament by a majority seven times greater than that secured by Mr. Caine in 1900.

So much for some of Sir Wilfrid's characteristics, from which example may be taken. I will now draw the readers'

attention to two practical methods of prime importance to the Indian reformer: (1) The nature and ways of the British elector, and (2) the best means of furthering Indian interests in Britain. On these points much light is thrown by the words of wit and wisdom which give the experience of so shrewd an observer as Sir Wilfrid. The first point with regard to the British elector, is the difficulty of understanding him. As to this, Sir Wilfrid says: "My electioneering experience in Cumberland and elsewhere leads me to the conclusion that no creature which God has created is so difficult to understand as the British elector. You can never safely predict what he will do under any circumstances." On another occasion he said, "Mankind are, indeed, incomprehensible, especially the English." Under this humorous presentment there lies the substantial fact that the electorate is so beset with vast and complicated surroundings, there are so many cross-currents of home and foreign, and colonial interests, that it is very difficult to gain an insight into the working of the great machine. But for India the electorate is of vital importance, as the final court of appeal. My proposition, therefore, is that Indian reformers should set themselves to study the British elector, and diligently to adopt every means by which he can be usefully influenced.

In this investigation what help can we get from Sir Wilfrid? "The real religion of the Englishman", he says, "is worship of vested interests." And again, referring to the many good schemes which could not get forward, he says, "one is impressed by the staunch, solid hatred to change which dominates our people." This instinctive conservatism of the English people must be reckoned with by the Indian reformer. It is not shared in by the Irishman, the Scotchman, or the Welshman; but then the

Englishman, by his great superiority in numbers over al the others combined, is the "predominant partner" in the House of Commons. Addressing an Edinburgh audience, Sir Wilfrid said: "Here in Scotland you are logical, intelligent, enlightened, and you have got rid of the old fallacies." On the other hand, the ordinary Englishman—the man in the street—is not logical, and he loves the old fallacies. If, by a process of reasoning, you prove your case to a Scotchman, you have gone far to convert him: in his ancient parish school, and under the rigor of calvinistic pulpits, he has been trained to logical conclusions. But this is not so with the Englishman. On the contrary, if you prove that one of his cherished institutions is logically absurd, you only make him angry. He has a vague idea that theory and practice are incompatible, and even antagonistic, and if, driven by unanswerable arguments, he admits that your proposal is "all very well in theory," that means that he thinks it would be bad in practice, and nothing on earth will induce him to adopt it.

The Englishman is above all things a "practical" man, and has the merits as well as the defects of his temperament. He works by rule of thumb, and will (however unwillingly) make a change when he finds the existing state of matters unendurable. In such a case he will devise a working remedy, mostly in the nature of a compromise. He has in fact a perfect genius for getting out of a tight place. Such is the simple genesis of the Englishman's institutions, and his extraordinary national success confirms him in his traditional methods. He may be likened to a man being in a fine old Elizabethan mansion, which stands firm against all weathers, because each brick has been bound to its neighbour with well-tempered mortar. If you explain to this man that some of the walls

are out of the perpendicular, that the front elevation offends the rules of architecture, and that the whole ground plan is absurd, you will only make him angry. He will not dream of changing that which his forefathers built up, and which fits into every nook and cranny of his nature. On the other hand, he will in his practical way deal with a definite evil; if, for example, typhoid breaks out in his household, he will look up the drains, and take infinite trouble to establish a sound system of sanitation. So also in politics. Let us take an illustration. When a Member of Parliament desires to resign his seat, he can do so by accepting the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, on the ground that he thereby accepts an office of emolument under the Crown. As a matter of fact the stewardship carries no emolument, and is not an office under the Crown. But this absurd fiction hurts no one, so it remains unchanged. On the other hand if the veto of the House of Lords (which Sir Wilfrid calls "the most absurd and mischievous of all institutions") is found to produce an *impasse*, John Bull will (sooner or later) find a fair practical remedy in accordance with his traditions.

There remains to consider the best means of furthering Indian interests in England. I can only repeat the advice which I have given again and again to my Indian friends, that persistent efforts should be made in England, which is the seat of power. These efforts should be directed (*a*) to influencing those in chief authority, and (*b*) to making an appeal at first hand to King Demos. At first sight the prospect may not appear hopeful. The *vis inertiæ* of the English temperament, described above, makes it difficult to effect a change, unless the elector himself feels the pinch of the shoe. And all governments are disinclined to take action which may possibly damage

them in the country. This discouraging truth is expressed by Sir Wilfrid with his familiar humour: "I don't think" he says, "that, as a rule, any English government, whatever its party title may be, is very keen about reforming anything, and will only—probably can only—do it when somebody or other outside is kicking up a fearful row." On the other hand, experience shows that a bold appeal to broad and noble principles rarely fails to sway the British democracy; also Secretaries of State of both parties, as for example, Lord Randolph Churchill and Lord Morley, have been willing, even eager, to hear what accredited Indian representatives have to urge. In very recent times we have seen the success which has attended the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and the Right Hon'ble Mr. Amir Ali in their personal communications with the Secretary of State. The opportunity is particularly favourable when the Liberals are in power, because then pressure can be brought in demanding that a Liberal government should apply Liberal principles to Indian affairs. Also India has sympathetic and powerful allies in the Irish members and in the Labour party, which will undoubtedly grow in strength when our electoral system is placed on a proper basis. In conclusion, I must say that leading men in India will not have done their duty to their motherland until they establish in England, at the seat of power, a permanent delegation of trusted and competent representatives to hold a watching brief, and seize every opportunity of furthering the interests of India.—The *Hindustan Review*, December, 1910.

GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE.

A message lies before me, which may truly be said to write sorrow on the bosom of the earth—a telegram from Bombay, saying, " Universal mourning in India Gokhale's untimely death, loss of such true son and patriot irreparable."

His health, strained by ceaseless public duties, had been the cause of deep anxiety to his friends, but since his return to India there had been a more hopeful feeling; and in the last letter received from him he said, " I am slowly but steadily improving." The fatal news has therefore come as a sudden blow, deadening the mind, and making it difficult to write even a few lines to express the feeling, akin to despair, which must visit those who for years have looked to him for counsel and guidance.

The telegram truly says that the loss is irreparable, both on account of his intrinsic qualities and on account of the extraordinary influence for good that he was able to exercise both in India and in this country. He was endeared to all who knew him for his saintly character, and he was revered for the power of his intellect; standing before the world as the finest type of the Indian sage. But besides all personal feeling, and looking to the future of India, his loss at this critical time cannot be over-estimated : for he enjoyed, as no other living person enjoys, the combined confidence of thinking minds in India and in England. He was a link of true metal uniting the East and the West.

THE SERVICE OF THE PEOPLE.

It is not now the time to attempt a record of his life-work, but for the general reader in this country a brief

reference may be made to some leading incidents in a strenuous career entirely devoted to the service of the people. In the first place it should be remembered that, during his early years, he sat at the feet of Mr. Justice Ranade, being the favourite "Chela" of that good and wise man, the Gamaliel for the brightest spirits among the young men of that day. Mr. Justice Ranade was himself the disciple of the veteran teacher, Dadabhai Naoroji, so that it was in the third generation that Gopal Krishna Gokhale carried forward that tradition of public service which determined the course of his life.

Shortly after leaving college he associated himself with a band of friends who bound themselves to devote the 20 best years of their life to the education of Indian youth. With self-denial and enthusiasm such as animated the religious brotherhoods of the Middle Ages, they put aside the brilliant professional careers which may be before them, and for these 20 years lived on starvation allowance, working as professors at the Fergusson College, which they founded at Poona, to carry on higher education on an independent and national basis.

His manifold practical activities in India and in England may be briefly indicated. Sympathising with all movements of reform, he naturally took an active part in the development of the Indian National Congress, identifying himself with the party who hold firmly to constitutional methods, and trust to the ultimate justice of the British people. In 1905, at a time of storm and stress, he was called on, as a peacemaker, to preside over the Congress at Benares. A firm hand was then needed at the helm.

His accurate knowledge and power of handling figures served him well when, as the representative of the non-

official members of the Bombay Legislature, he became a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. There as the leader of the independent members of the Council, he took an active part in all the debates, his most prominent work being his Bill to provide free and compulsory elementary education. This measure was very dear to his heart, and he supported it with great power and pathos, dwelling on the sad and helpless illiteracy of the Indian masses. The Bill did not pass, but he proved his case, and his memory will blossom afresh when, in no distant future, the light is brought to those who now sit in darkness.

But perhaps the undertaking which more than any other will perpetuate his work and influence was the foundation ten years ago of "The Servants of India Society." Believing in the nobility of human endeavour, and that he that would be the greatest should be the servant of all, he gathered around him a band of young men who lived the simple life under his tutelage in the society's home near Poona, and whom he trained to devote themselves whole-heartedly to the service of Mother India.

HIS WORK IN ENGLAND.

A few words must suffice regarding his work in England, where he was trusted as a man of sound judgment, undoubted loyalty, and full knowledge of Indian affairs. At public meetings his persuasive eloquence carried his hearers with him; and as an example of the influence he exercised may be instanced his visit to Manchester at a very difficult time, when the interests of Lancashire appeared to be threatened by the Bengal boycott of Manchester cotton goods. On that occasion, in two days, he addressed four most important meetings: (1) the Federated Trades Councils, (2) the Manchester Chamber of

Commerce, (3) a meeting of merchants connected with Indian trade, and (4) the Manchester Liberal Association. In no case did he fail to produce a profound and favourable impression by the accuracy of his information and the cogency of his arguments. At personal interviews he was equally successful. To the credit of British statesmen of all parties, it may be recorded that they have all been willing to give a hearing to Mr. Gokhale; and it is no secret that, as Secretary of State for India, Lord Morley accorded to him prolonged interviews, at which he set forth fully the needs and aspirations of the Indian people. The information thus imparted influenced in no small degree the concessions granted in the Morley-Minto reforms. Space does not allow me to note, even briefly, the services he rendered to all the Indian races by his mission to South Africa; nor can I refer to his labours on the Royal Commission on the Indian Public Service, which occupied his anxious care up to the last hours of his life.

Suffering from the pain of so sudden a personal grief, these hurried lines are all that I can, at the moment, write regarding my friend. In saying good-bye last September he doubted whether he would again see England or again shake me by the hand. In one respect his expressed wish was fulfilled, for he has died at home in his own country, in the loving presence of his family and the friends of his youth.—*Daily News*, February, 1915.

MAHADEV GOVINDA RANADE.

In reviewing the "Miscellaneous Writings of the late Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade" in the columns of "India," May, 7, 1915, Sir William Wedderburn wrote:—

I may be pardoned if, in conclusion, I add a few words regarding my personal relations with Mr. Ranade, whose friendship I enjoyed for over 30 years. From my friends among the Bombay reformers I learnt that he was recognised as the leader of reform in Poona, and that he was silently at work cultivating the fertile intellectual soil of the Peshwa's capital; but for some time I did not have an opportunity of making his acquaintance. The fact was that, owing to his somewhat excessive shyness, noted above, Mr. Ranade did not seek the society of European officers, even of those most friendly to Indian aspirations, and this led to his being regarded with a certain amount of official disfavour, and even suspicion. Hence I was warned that I must proceed with circumspection if I wished to penetrate the armour of his reserve. Now, I have always held, as regards British officials, that, being foreigners in the land, our first duty is, with care and diligence, to seek out as our advisers the Indians most trusted by their fellow-countrymen, keeping at arm's length the self-seekers who are naturally drawn to the official sources of honours and emolument. Holding this view, the warning I received made me all the more anxious to establish touch with this strong and silent man, who was indifferent to personal advantage. By the help of suitable introductions this object was achieved, so that from an early stage of my official pilgrimage I had the benefit of a

comradeship with Mr. Ranade which only terminated with the life of my noble-hearted friend. It was characteristic of Mr. Ranade's self-contained nature that he never took any direct steps to right himself in official estimation. He went calmly on his way, continuing his work steadily, as a social reformer among his own people, and as an exemplary judicial officer in the public service. Ultimately good sense prevailed in official quarters; the clouds of suspicion dispersed; from one grade of the public service he rose to another; and at last emerged as a Judge of the Bombay High Court, and the most trusted adviser of the Government when Indian problems of the moment had to be solved.

On retirement from the Bench, it was his intention to devote himself exclusively to the service of Mother India—but this opportunity was denied him. In the present volume is reproduced an address delivered by him to the Bombay Graduates' Association, on the question, "Why Graduates Die Young?" In it he blamed the severities of the examination system as causing the mental and physical strain, which saps the vital energies of Indian students, and prematurely slits the thin spun life. In his own case there is no doubt that lifelong toil, especially in his earlier years, had undermined his health; so that poor India had to lament his loss just at the time when she was about to receive the full benefit of his mature knowledge and wisdom.

A MEMORY OF MR. KEIR HARDIE.

Allow me to thank you for the appreciation (with an excellent portrait) of Mr. Keir Hardie, which appeared in the last number of *India*. You have well described him, in the words of Mr. Andrew Fisher, as "a brave and true man who led the people in the way he thought right, uncaring for personal consequences." Some wise philosopher has said that there are really only two kinds of people in the world: those who think for themselves, and those who do not. Emphatically Mr. Keir Hardie was one of those who think for themselves: and whether we agree or not in his views, we must recognise in him the native integrity and unconquerable will which, from the days of Robert the Bruce, have made of the commonalty of Scotland the backbone of Scottish liberties.

I have known Mr. Kier Hardie for the last thirty years—" he was my friend, faithful and just to me"—and if I may be allowed a personal reminiscence, I will call to mind what occurred in 1885, when, on my retirement from India, I undertook (unsuccessfully) to contest the great industrial constituency of North Ayrshire. Having been invited by the Liberal Association to be their candidate, I went down to the constituency and then discovered that Mr. Keir Hardie, who was a native of the country, had been invited by an advanced section to come forward as the representative of Independent Labour. Here was a difficult position, as I had no idea of running counter to the wishes of the Scottish working

man. But a way out of the difficulty was found. Under the kindly chairmanship of Mr. MacLelland, the esteemed Provost of Ayr, I met Mr. Keir Hardie and his friends at a round-table conference, and after a proper heckling, was happily passed as sufficiently sound on Labour questions to be accepted as the candidate for the united progressives. We failed at the general election on the question of Irish Home Rule, but that was not the fault of Mr. Keir Hardie and his friends, who gave me their loyal support.

That was many years ago, and it was long after that the secret of the agreement came out. India was the cause. To quote the words of Mr. Keir Hardie, when speaking of the Ayrshire incident at a public meeting in London in 1908, he said that "some of his personal friends once wanted to begin a policy of isolation, as it was called in those days, by refusing to support Liberal candidates, but he held a special meeting with them and got them to make an exception in favour of Sir. W. Wedderburn, not because of his qualifications, good as those were, but because he stood essentially for the cause of the people of India."

Indians will thus see that Mr. Keir Hardie's sympathies were not limited to his own class and country, and that from the very outset of his public career nothing was nearer his heart than the welfare of the millions of India.—*India*, October 8, 1915

SIR P. M. MEHTA.

All friends of India, and of the British Empire, will receive with deep regret the news of the death of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, who for half a century has been the leading personality in the City of Bombay. A convinced friend of the British connection, he has during this long period exercised a vast influence in allaying racial differences, in teaching the true principles of ordered progress, and in guiding his fellow-citizens in the practical duties of municipal self-government.

In these critical times it is important that the British people should know who are their true friends, the men who, in fair weather and in foul, have maintained their faith in British justice, and have striven to bring India into permanent solidarity with the British Empire, because they believe that it represents freedom and progress throughout the world. The patriarch who first preached such doctrines was Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the G. O. M. of India, and in the next generation he was followed by the brilliant triumvirate of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Mr. Justice Ranade, and Mr. Justice Badrudin Tyabji, who represented the three great communities of India. Gopal Krishna Gokhale and his fellow-workers belonged to the third generation of educated leaders. These are the enlightened patriots whose influence has generated that whole-hearted enthusiasm for the British cause which has been the wonder alike of friends and of foes.

Surprise was not unnatural to those who are unfamiliar with Indian modes of thought, and the permanence

of institutions in an ancient civilisation. Practically the old divisions of Manu are still in active force; the Thinkers, the Fighters, the Traders, and the Peasantry. In these later days, the Thinkers are respresented by the educated class, the Indian "Intellectuals," who do the political thinking for the other classes who make up the millions of India. And happily for the future of humanity their influence has been strong enough to outweigh considerations of race and creed, and to bring India into the front rank as a champion of freedom and righteousness.

Among such true patriots Sir Pherozeshah Mehta will in history occupy an honoured place.—*Daily News*, November, 1915.

PRINCIPAL WORDSWORTH.

[*The following letter from Sir William was published in the "Times" Educational Supplement in March*, 1917.]

It was the good fortune of Bombay, when her university was founded in 1857, that the sponsors of Western arts and sciences were men of scholarly attainments and high ideals: and among them none impressed his personality more beneficially on young India than William Wordsworth, the grandson of the poet and beloved Principal of Elphinstone College, who has now passed away at Rome after peaceful years of retirement in his home on the Island of Capri, overlooking the Tyrrhenian Sea. Of his fellow-workers none save two veterans, Sir George Birdwood and Professor Dadabhai Naoroji, now survive; and even his distinguished alumni, are gone—civic leaders like

Pherozeshah Mehta and G. K. Gokhale, and learned Judges like Ranade, Telang, and Budrudin Tyabji.

Perhaps, therefore, you will find space for these few lines of affectionate record (*Quis desiderio sit modus ?*) from a lifelong friend. For we were boys together in Italy, bathing in the Serchio, and wandering over the Apennines ; and afterwards in Bombay, with our families, we shared a garden bungalow on the pleasant slopes of Malabar Hill. I have now before me a little volume, modestly entitled "Gleanings of Verse," printed for private circulation, which he dedicated to his dearly loved wife :—

IN MEMORIAM.—M. E. W.

Dearest, from me withdraw behind the veil,
What love, what homage shown, can now avail ?
Yet as upon your grave spring flowers I strew,
And think that then I have a smile from you,
So now I gather thus from distant years
Words which once brought to us kisses or tears.

SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD.

[*Sir William Wedderburn addressed the following letter to "India" on July* 3, 1917 :]

The "Times," in its review of Sir George Bridwood's career, recounts the many-sided activities of my dear old friend, and does justice to the rare originality of a nature "at once yielding and dominating, sympathetic and cynical, shrewd and quixotic, but invariably self-sacrificing, generous, and helpful in every worthy cause." To illustrate these characteristics I might have contributed some personal reminiscences, but for the moment I have not access to the letters I have at home, disclosing his militant enthusiasm and ardent pursuit of high ideals.

Truth unadulterated was what he ever sought and fearlessly declared, however unwelcome it might be to the common herd. Indeed, he had scanty patience for the obvious and conventional. And this reminds me of a little episode which occurred long years ago in connection with the Bombay Press. To me as a sympathiser with his views, he proposed that we should found a small unconventional magazine to stimulate public thought by startling propositions. He had already decided on the name. It was to be called "The Spasm," partly because it was to appear spasmodically, at uncertain intervals, as the spirit might move us, and partly because it was intended to produce a spasm in the penetralia of the offending Philistine. Unfortunately, this beneficent project did not materialise.

When, on his retirement from India, he accepted duty at the India Office, it was a privilege to ascend to his well-stocked sanctum in the top storey and gain refreshment from his eager personality. To apply the words of Emerson (I quote from memory), he was "liberally hospitable to all manner of ideas, deeming it less discreditable to entertain error unawares than to treat any form of truth with scorn and contumely."

In British politics Sir George professed the Tory creed, but he was a sound Radical as regards Indian aspirations.

DADABHAI NAOROJI: 1825—1917.

[" *The cable announcing his dear friend Dadabhai Naoroji's death reached Sir William Wedderburn when away from home. One after another his original co-workers for India have passed away: **Allan Hume**, William Wordsworth, Dadabhai Naoroji; and he now feels the loneliness of survival." He writes as follows to " India," July* 6, 1917 :]

The last time I saw Mr. Dadabhai was in 1910 when, on my way to Allahabad, I visited him in his retreat at Versova. It was a real pleasure to find him well and cheerful, spending the evening of his days in his peaceful home by the Indian sea, under spreading palm trees, surrounded by loving relatives and friends.

Now he has gone to his well-earned rest: and all India mourns the man who ever bravely held aloft the standard of high ideals, who never doubted that in the end there would be a true union of East and West, based on justice and freedom.

What can I say of my personal feelings on the loss of my friend? Little need be said: except that, for long years, working for India with Mr. Hume and Mr. Dadabhai, no shadow of difference ever arose between us, as regards the objects to be attained, the methods to be employed, or the abiding hope for India's happy future, which was never abandoned.

PART VI.

REPLIES TO ADDRESSES AND ENTERTAINMENTS.

LUNCHEON AT THE NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB.

At the National Liberal Club, London, on December 6, 1889, *Mr. George Yule, ex-President of the Congress, entertained Sir William Wedderburn before his departure to India to preside over the Fifth Congress at Bombay. In replying to the toast proposed in his honour, Sir William said :—*

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen,—I thank you sincerely for the hearty way in which you have received the toast. I feel much your kindness to myself, but above all I value your presence here to-day as a mark of your warm sympathy with the suffering millions of India. This great Liberal Club represents the van-guard of the army of progress, and I welcome those hearty cheers, because I regard them as a token that you are determined that justice shall be done, and that the great trust of England towards India shall be duly discharged. This trust which has to be discharged is no light one. The vast masses of India are altogether unrepresented ; they have no voice in the management of their own affairs. Indeed, the two hundred millions of our Indian fellow-citizens all put together have not as much direct power in the management of Indian affairs as one single British elector. (*Shame.*) These poor people are in the hollow of your hand, and the people of this country are really directly responsible for

their lives, for their progress, both material and social, and for their happiness. And when we look to the past I fear it cannot be said that this trust has been satisfactorily fulfilled. (*Hear, hear.*) Perhaps we may claim that the sins of the people of England have been those of omission rather than of commission. Whenever the people of England have interfered with Indian affairs it has been an interference for good, it has been an interference that confers some substantial boon, or to bring to justice some great official offender; and I think it will be to the everlasting credit of the English name that the English people have always desired that India should share with them all the privileges, the freedom, and progress which we ourselves possess. (*Hear, hear.*) That has been their desire, but it is not enough that they should mean well. We know what becomes of good intentions—(*laughter*)—especially if those good intentions are not fulfilled. It must be said that we have committed one great sin of omission, and that is, that we do not look to the trust ourselves, but we have blindly and wrongfully handed over that trust to our official agents in India. I say that we have done that blindly and wrongfully, because the professional interests of our official agents in India are in direct antagonism to the interests of those whom we are bound to protect. In all countries we know that the interests of the people—that is, of the taxpayers—are not identical with the interests of the officials, that is, the tax-eaters. In India this is especially the case. The interests of the people in India are peace, economy, and reform. (*Hear, hear.*) And every one of these things is distasteful to the military clique which reigns at Simla. Wars like that of Burmah mean the provision of good things;

they bring annexation with titles and promotion, governorships, and distinctions. Again, how can you expect officials to love economy, which means reduction of their own salaries? (*Laughter.*) And how can we expect them to vote for reform, which means simply the restriction of the unlimited power which they now enjoy? It is, therefore, quite certain that we cannot expect from them great activity in the direction of peace, economy, and reform. I would not blame this class of feeling from only professional instincts; what I blame is the system which gives to that class uncontrolled power. (*Cheers.*) In England we find it practically impossible to control the great spending departments—(*hear, hear*)—although nominally, at least, we are the masters. What can we expect when positions are exactly reversed, when the great spending departments are the absolute masters, and where the taxpayer is only the man whose duty it is to pay the taxes that are demanded from him? Of course, we cannot expect to have a rule which will be hurtful to the professional prospects of those who administer the affairs of India. We may say, of course, there is a check in this country upon the doings of the official of India. But what does that check consist of? I say there is practically no control whatever over the officials of India. It is no doubt true that from official decisions there does lie an appeal to the India Office, but the Secretary of State, as we know, knows nothing about it; and we also know that his Council is recruited from the innermost clique of those very officials against whom the complaints from India come. I say, therefore, that the appeal to the Secretary of State in Council is worse than no appeal at all. And then we may say the House of Commons will exercise control. We all know

what they do in that way; they give at the fag end of the session, about half-a-day to the consideration of the whole affairs of that great Empire. ('*Shame*') If such is the case, what is the result of this uncontrolled administration of India? I think the results are just those natural results we should expect from such a state of things. We find a grinding taxation and extreme poverty of the people. I will not be certain as to the exact figures but it is estimated that the average income of the Indian taxpayer is about three halfpence a day. That does not give material for much taxation, one might say; but the taxation in proportion to income in India is about double what it is in this rich country of England. ('*Shame.*') Take, for example, the case of salt, which for a vegetarian people is a practical necessity of life. The duty upon salt is twenty times the cost of production, which acts as a most cruel poll-tax upon the very poorest classes of the population. And again, as to poverty, we know how excessively poor they are. It is estimated that one-fifth of the population, or something like forty millions of the people, practically go through life without knowing what it is to have their hunger satisfied. They all live so terribly near the verge of sustenance that one bad year, one failure of the periodical rains, brings wholesale famine over great provinces. At the last great famine in Madras and Bombay there were officially reported five million deaths from hunger, mostly poor, industrious peasantry and their wives and children. It is almost impossible to conceive what that means; but it means that a population was destroyed larger than that of London, and larger than that of Ireland. Well, gentlemen, what is the remedy thht we have to adopt in dealing with this great problem of India

Hitherto the great difficulty has been that the people of India have been dumb, and that we have no means of finding out where the shoe pinches. But now at least they have found their voice. (*Hear, hear.*) They have found a voice from the great and good boons that they have received from the British people. They have found a voice because we have given them a free press, free public meetings, and, what they value more than all else, we have given them higher education. (*Hear, hear.*) They have now found a voice, and through the Indian National Congress they are now addressing the people of England, and they are telling them how India may be made prosperous and contented, and they are telling them that a just and a conciliatory policy may consolidate for many years to come the foundations of British Rule. (*Hear, hear.*) In expressing my thanks to you I hope you will also allow me to express our best thanks to our host and chairman. (*Loud cheers.*) I express also my thanks for the kind references he has made to me, and for the good wishes he has communicated to me with regard to the office which he has so worthily filled. (*Cheers.*) When I first became aware that I was going to be selected for the presidency, the first thing I did was to betake myself to the study of Mr. Yule's presidential address, and I most fervently trust that the spirit which animated that address may fall like an Elijah's mantle upon myself, for it was a spirit of wise discretion and of convincing common sense. Mr. Yule has to-day referred to the reforms that we desire in the legislative councils of India, and he has explained how extremely moderate the demands are with reference to those Councils. Indeed, some people might think that the demands were almost too moderate. It reminds me a little of the story of the

Scotch servant-girl who obtained leave to have an interview with her young man. When she came back to her mistress she seemed out of humour and not satisfied. The lady said, "Well, what is the matter? Was Jock nae civil?" "Oh," she said, "Jock was ceevil; he was senselessly ceevil." (*Laughter.*) Probably his demands had been almost too moderate. (*Renewed Laughter.*) I think, perhaps, in the same way it may be thought that these proposals of the Congress hardly go far enough. In the present position of things, I think, it is wiser and more prudent to keep within the most careful bounds of moderation. Mr, Yule, in his address at Allahabad, pointed out that when we bring forward any measures of reform our opponents meet us in various ways. There are four phases in which they pose before they are brought to a proper condition of mind. They first receive our proposals with ridicule; the second phase is that of abuse: from that they go on to partial concession accompanied with misapprehension of our objects; and the last and happiest stage of all is when they entirely adopt our proposals, and wonder that these excellent proposals have not been adopted before. (*Laughter.*) Mr. Yule pointed out that we are now between the second and the third of these stages of abuse; that is to say, that we are between the times of abuse and partial adoption. I am glad to say that I think that even since the Allahabad meeting of last Christmas we have considerably progressed, and that we may say that this question is between the third and fourth stages, between partial concession and total adoption. My reason for saying this is the utterances of the authorised mouthpiece of the Government when speaking about Indian affairs. Sir John Gorst, in the House of Commons, speaking in a debate on

the Address in answer to Mr. Bradlaugh upon the subject of the aspirations of the native races to share in the management of their own affairs, said: 'The honourable member has accused this Government of looking with an unfriendly eye on the aspirations of the natives to the share of the government of their own country. But the truth is that no more unfortunate charge could be made. It is not true. It is not only the policy of the present Government, but it has been the policy of every Government of India for the last thirty years, to extend to the natives of India not only a share in the administration of their country, but so far as is possible the management of their own affairs.' (*Cheers.*) That is what Sir John Gorst said in the debate on the Address, and afterwards in the debate on the Indian Budget, when he spoke with special reference to the reform of the Legislative Councils. He said the Government concurred with Lord Lansdowne, who wished to make every practicable concession. He wished to enlarge the Councils and to give them the discussion of the Budget, the financial statement, and also to give them the right of interpellation. He also said that the Government were desirous of legislating with a view to giving effect to those wishes, but that he had been obliged to advise them that this was impossible on account of the position of parties. I suppose this meant that the Government was willing to legislate if they could be assured of the support of the Liberal party. It appears that if we are waiting for Sir John Gorst, equally Sir John Gorst is waiting for us. History repeats itself, and it appears as if Sir John Gorst were a sort of latter-day Sir Richard Strachan, and that we are in the position of the Lord Chatham, of whom it is said:

'Lord Chatham, with his sword drawn,
Stood waiting for Sir Richard Strachan;
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,
Stood waiting for the Earl of Chatham.'

If that is really the only difference that stands in the way of Government, that difficulty can be removed, and we hope that the friends of India will be able to co-operate for a forward movement in this matter for the next session. For this purpose we hope to be able to form a sort of Indian party consisting of all those, whatever their difference of opinions in other matters, who are willing to co-operate upon the broad basis of a just and sympathetic policy towards India. (*Cheers.*)

RECEPTION AT POONA.

On the 2nd of January, 1890, *Sir W. Wedderburn honoured Poona with a flying visit. The following address was on that occasion presented to him by the Sarvajanika Sabha* :—

We, the Members of the Poona Sarvajanika Sabha, respectfully crave leave to approach you with this humble expression of our thankfulness for the high honour you have done us by snatching a few hours, amidst many engagements, from the extremely short time at your disposal, to pay a flying visit to this city. Your connection with Poona has been long and memorable; and it is a source of great happiness to us to find that even after your retirement from this country, you retain a kindly and sympathetic recollection of that connection.

2. Your services in this Presidency, as a member of the Civil Service, have been too distinguished, and are too fresh in the minds of us all, to need any detailed reference here. In whatever capacity you served, we always found that you succeeded by your example in infusing a spirit of sympathy for the people in those above you, while you won the respect and love of all who came in contact with you; and, we believe, we are stating the bare truth when we say that the administration of this Presidency owes not a little of the tone of sympathy, which chararacterises it, to the elevating influence of your noble personality, and to the unselfish exertions which you unremittingly made for the welfare of those who were confided to your care.

3. The self-same devotion to the interests of India was to be seen in the cheerful readiness with which you consented to come to this country all the way from England, for presiding over and guiding the deliberations of the Fifth Indian National Congress. This is not the place for us to dwell on the vast accession of strength which our great national movement has acquired by being able to count you among its Presidents. But when we consider how great were the sacrifices which you had to make in coming here, we cannot help saying, in the simple language of heart-felt gratitude, "we thank you."

4. The Sabha ventures to express its devout hope that the electors of North Ayrshire will do themselves the honour of electing you as their representative in the House of Commons, and thereby also confer a great obligation on the people of India. It is true that inside Parliament or outside it, your enthusiasm and

earnestness for our welfare will be all the same. But by your return to the House of Commons, the Indian Party in Parliament, which you have yourself for many years nobly and strenuously striven to form, will be a living and flourishing organization, rendering service to India as no body of men has hitherto rendered. The Congress proposals on various questions, and especially in regard to the reform of the Legislative Councils, have now been formally entrusted to Mr. Bradlaugh; and it will be your care to strengthen his hands and enable him to press those proposals on the acceptance of Parliament. The visit of the Indian Delegates to England and the work of the Indian Political Agency will also demand the support of all the English friends of India. If you succeed in entering Parliament we feel sure that your presence in the House of Commons will be of the greatest service to this country. Carry on, therefore, your noble fight in North Ayrshire, and a whole nation's prayers will go up in your behalf.

In a brief reply, Sir William most heartily thanked the Sabha for the very kind terms in which, he said, the address spoke of him. He would be proud to show that certificate of good conduct from his old employers to his electors in North Ayrshire. He valued the address especially because it came from the Sarvajanika Sabha, which was one of the most valuable and important political bodies in India, and certainly the most valuable and important body in this part of the country. He hoped the Sabha would ever work with the same earnestness and the same success with which it had been till then labouring in the interests of the people. Referring to the Fifth National Congress, he said that it was a most impressive gathering, and that though he had lately attended some great meetings in Scotland got up by the Liberal Party, he had no hesitation in saying that in point of fervour, interest and order, the Congress gathering was superior to them. In conclusion, he remarked that the representations of the Indian people carried greater weight with the English people than any number of official statements, and therefore asked the Sabha to continue unremittingly its useful work.

DINNER AT THE WESTMINSTER HOTEL.

A Complimentary Dinner was given at the Westminster Palace Hotel on Wednesday evening (November 23, 1910) to Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., on the occasion of his election for the second time to the office of President of the Indian National Congress. Lord Courtney presided. Sir William, in replying to the toast, made the following speech :—

Lord Courtney, my Lord and gentlemen,—I feel sincerely grateful for your kindness in coming together this evening to wish me God-speed. On such an occasion it is pleasant to see around me so many tried and trusty friends, and it is of good omen that we have to preside over our proceedings a statesman so experienced and so wise. (Hear, hear.) I am much cheered by what Lord Courtney has said. There was a good saying of my dear old friend Sir Wilfrid Lawson, when he was fighting one of his many uphill battles. He used to say, We must hope all things, but expect nothing. That is the way to remain a cheerful optimist. (Hear, hear.) For the last twenty years, as regards India, it has been difficult to hope. We have had war, pestilence, and famine : an afflicted people driven well nigh to despair. But at last we seem to see a gleam of light. (Hear, hear.) I have never ceased to hope for better things. Now I almost dare to expect them. (Cheers.)

We hear a great deal about what people have agreed to call " unrest" in India. I rather like the term, because it does not prejudge the case. Unrest need not be a bad thing. The pains from which India has been suffering are not necessarily a sign of disease or decay. On the con-

trary, we have reason to believe that these pains are, in the main, the pains of growth, the awakening from lethargy, a natural movement towards a higher life. (Hear, hear.) I think this hope for the near future finds justification in the farewell words of the retiring Viceroy, Lord Minto—(hear, hear)—a brave and silent man whose personality has won the respect and affection of the Indian people. (Cheers.) For five long years he has borne a strain such as few men have had to endure. But he refuses to look only at the gloomy side of the picture. (Hear, hear.) He recognises that, in its essential spirit, the widespread political unrest is a sign of expansion and progress. (Hear, hear.) "Ambitions," he says, "whose justice could not be denied, have come into existence. They are due to the ripening of the educational seed sown by British rule." He refuses to believe that this political awakening is opposed to the stability of British rule. On the contrary, it is evidence that "the time has come for a further extension of representative principles in our administration." In the expanded Councils the Government will gradually draw to itself the best Indian co-operation, and "political agitation will make way for the discussion of great questions affecting the economic and industrial development, and the direction of the educational policy upon which the welfare of the people of India so vitally depends." Such is the hopeful forecast of the Viceroy who is taking off his armour. As regards his successor, let us not be so foolish as to prophesy. But, as he puts his armour on, we are glad to hear him say that he will "do his utmost to consolidate the beneficent and far-reaching scheme of reforms initiated by Lord Morley and Lord Minto for the association of the people of India more closely with the management of their own affairs, and to conciliate the races, classes and creeds."

(Hear, hear.) Personally, gentlemen, I am particularly glad to hear Lord Hardinge lay stress on conciliation of races, classes, and creeds—(hear, hear)—because that seems to be what is now most immediately needed, and also because my object in going to India is to take a part, however small it may be, in this healing work of conciliation. (Cheers.) At the present moment there are, unfortunately, three great antagonisms which stand in the way of progress. First, the antagonism between European officials and educated Indian opinion; secondly, that between Hindus and Mahomedans; and thirdly, that between Moderate reformers and Exremists. This sounds formidable; but I take heart of grace, because I give to each section the credit of wishing the welfare of India. (Hear, hear.) The difference is one, not of object, but of method. Take first the case of the European officials and Indian public opinion. As an old official I am not blind to the merits of the Civil Service, though I do not go so far as Mr. Valentine Chirol, the special correspondent of the "Times" who regards the Indian civilian as "the only real democrat in India"—(laughter)—and considers that "to him belongs the credit of almost every measure passed during the last 50 years for the benefit of the Indian masses." The question between the official and the non-official is one between the rulers and the ruled; and I have always believed in the wisdom of Sancho Panza, who said that in the everlasting quarrel between the muleteers and the mules, the mules on the whole are in the right. (Laughter.) But, however that may be, I have no doubt that Mr. Chirol is right when he says that "the personal contact established in the enlarged Councils between the Anglo-Indian official and the better class of Indian politicians may well serve to diminish the prejudices which exist on both sides." In

any case, I am persuaded, and speak from experience, that the civilian's life will be pleasanter and his burdens lighter, if he frankly accepts the co-operation which educated Indians are willing and anxious to afford. (Hear, hear.) Next, there is the antagonism between Hindus and Mahomedans. Mr. Chirol tells us that it "must be one of the chief objects of British statesmanship to compose this conflict." But the question is a domestic one, where it is a delicate matter for an outsider to intermeddle. However, I have ventured to approach the subject in consultation with some esteemed Indian friends in this country who are anxious to promote conciliation—(hear, hear) and I am betraying no confidence when I say that His Highness the Aga Khan, in agreement with Sir Pherozeshah Mehta—(cheers)—and my right Hon. friend on my right, Mr. Ameer Ali—(cheers)—has proposed to hold a friendly conference in Bombay, where the leaders of both communities may meet, with a view to a friendly settlement of differences. (Cheers.) Lastly, there are the differences between the Congress reformers and the Extremists. In 1885, when my dear friends, Mr. Hume—(cheers)—Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee——(cheers)—and Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji—(cheers)—founded the Indian National Congress there were no differences; for more than 20 years all Indians worked together, irrespective of race, caste, or creed; and year by year, patiently and respectfully, placed before the Government of India a reasoned statement of the people's needs. But in 1906, at Surat, there was a split in the Congress. The more impatient spirits, despairing of success by Congress methods, broke away from their former leaders, and sought salvation in other directions. The friends of progress viewed this break with deep distress. But may we not here also recognise

the pains of growth? I think we may, and that we may indulge the hope that, as the reforms develop, the feelings of despair will pass away, and there will again be agreement among Indian reformers. (Hear, hear.)

Gentlemen, I again thank you for your great kindness to me this evening. It is a curious coincidence that, whereas it was on November 25, 1860, that I first landed in Bombay, it is on November 25, 1910, that I am once more sailing for the shores of India. (Cheers.) I have sometimes claimed to be a Watandar, a hereditary servant of India—(hear, hear)—and next Friday I shall have completed exactly half a century in the direct service of the Indian people. (Loud cheers.) The people of India have a long memory, and the present invitation to preside at the Indian National Congress shows that they have not forgotten an old friend. (Loud cheers.)

ENTERTAINMENT AT BOMBAY.

[*Sir William Wedderburn was entertained at a dinner on his arrival in the city before the Allahabád Congress of* 1910 *by the Ripon Club, Bombay, when a large number of the members of the Club and guests were present. Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy presided. Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy proposing the toast of Sir William Wedderburn made a long speech, in the course of which he said:*—]

To-night we have met to express our appreciation of one, whom we cannot call an Indian, but who has made our cause as much his own, as if he had been one of our own kith and kin. The great and life-long labours of Sir William Wedderburn on behalf of the people of India are known to you all. Sir William, as you are aware, now a retired Civilian, had a distinguished career in this Presidency having filled all the highest offices including judgeship on the High Court Bench and acting membership in the Executive Council during Lord Reay's brillant administration. After his retirement, he was not content with merely drawing this

pension, but with pen and tongue, he has laboured incessantly for the good of this country. The strength he has devoted, the ease he has sacrificed and the money he has spent, the extent of all this is not known even to his associates. I have mentioned Sir William's pecuniary sacrifices last, but I believe I ought to have placed the item first; for gentleman, it pains me to state it, but there are not wanting men amongst us, whose patriotism vanishes the moment their pocket is touched. All honour then to the man who has given us freely of all he has and all that he has been endowed with.

Gentlemen, I would like to draw your particular attention to one aspect of the work which is being done by the friends of India in England. Much of it was accomplished in time past amidst the obloquy and ridicule of a majority of their own countrymen. Honours and offices which would, in other countries, await the champion of popular liberties, have not fallen to the lot of men like Sir William, who perform at best an odious duty. But, gentlemen, times are changing, and one rejoice to find a growing tendency on the part of Englishmen to approach Indian problems in a spirit of sympathy. Thus our friends are no longer crying in the wilderness; their efforts are beginning to be appreciated, as evidence among other things, by the large and influential gathering, which lately met to bid our guest farewell Gentlemen, I do not wish to detain you with the lengthened expression of sentiments which all India has long entertained. On behalf of the Ripon Club which has on its roll many a name honoured in this city, I offer you, Sir William, a cordial greeting. We hope that the meeting of the Congress under your guidance will be attended with success, and that the great mission with which you have charged yourself wlil meet with the support it deserves. If, you, Sir, in the evening of your life, succeed in paving the way to a settlement of the difference which exist between the two great communities of India you will have rendered a service, which will entitle you to the lasting gratitude of Englishmen and Indians alike. Gentlemen, I give you the toast of Sir William Wedderburn. I have no doubt you will drink with enthusiasm to the health of one, who is above everything else, a high-minded English gentleman.

Sir William Wedderburn, in reply to the toast of his health, which had been enthusiastically received, said:—

It was in 1860 that I first saw Bombay. Now I come back in 1910, after just half a century. Much has taken place in the interval. For some years India seemed to have sunk into lethargy. But now that is all changed. India is now awake, and I feel it a privilege, to be among you at so interesting a time. Sir Jamasetji has referred

in sympathetic terms to my duties in connection with the Congress and on behalf of the distinguished company you have wished success to our labours in the cause of peace and good-will. This approval is very encouraging to me. For where will you find public opinion more sound and more cosmopolitan than in this City of Bombay—" urbs prima in India "—which is the link between the East and the West, between India and England, a link geographical and commercial, and also social and political. That was my feeling when a few days ago I sailed into your beautiful harbour, and entered your noble city, with its teeming and friendly population. Truly Bombay is a " precious-stone set in the silver sea." And its inhabitants are worthy to possess so great a commercial capital.

For nowhere will you find more public spirit, more enterprise, more practical business capacity. Within the last few weeks I have enjoyed the society of two of your foremost citizens, who are not present here to-day. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, who you so recently honoured with a send-off banquet on his visit to England and our dear Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India, to whom I have made a pilgrimage at his happy family retreat at Versova. These are the sons of Bombay, and I think we may challenge any city in the world to do " one better.' Gentlemen, I thank you for your kindness. Allow me in conclusion to wish prosperity to Bombay, and happiness to the Indian people.

RECEPTION AT CALCUTTA.

Sir William Wedderburn, the President of the Indian National Congress at Allahabad, was presented with an address of welcome at a public meeting of the citizens of both Bengals, held at the Town Hall on his visit to Calcutta soon after the Congress. The hall was crowded and the utmost enthusiasm prevailed. A sprinkling of ladies attended. On the motion of Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, seconded by Mr. A. Chaudhuri, Dr. Rash Behary Ghose was elected to the Chair. The Chairman opened the proceedings by reading the address of welcome. The address was enclosed in a bamboo casket heavily inlaid with gold and it was presented to Sir William together with a solid silver tea-set bearing pictorial representations of rural life in Bengal as well as a silk handkerchief on which a map of India was printed.

Sir William Wedderburn who was lustily applauded, replied as follows :—

Dr. Ghose, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Allow me to return to you my most grateful thanks for this mark of your regard. It is, indeed, gratifying if you think that my brief visit has in any way forwarded the cause of peace and conciliation.

It is most kind of you to express such warm appreciation of the movement, in which I have been permitted to take part, to promote more friendly feeling between the two great communities of India. I think the Conference at Allahabad constitutes a good beginning in this direction and the best thanks of all well-wishers of India are due to H. H. the Aga Khan and other Moslem

leaders and to Babu Sarada Charan Mitra and other Hindu leaders for the spirit of wise conciliation which marked the deliberations of the Conference. I earnestly trust that the work thus begun will be persevered with in spite of all difficulties by leading men on both sides, and I am sure they will find much to encourage them in the sympathy which H. E. the Viceroy was pleased to express with the movement in his gracious reply to the address of the Congress Deputation.

It is a source of sincere gratification to me to find that you fully recognize the value and importance of the Congress propaganda in England. There can be no doubt as to the truth of what you have said regarding the methods by which we should promote the cause of Indian reform. These methods must be strictly constitutional, and they must be inspired by genuine loyalty. Our work whether in India or in England, must be guided by such principles; and this leads me to speak of a telegram from England which has given me much pain, referring as it does to a friend and colleague who has worked long and earnestly for the advancement of India. The telegram ascribes to him an expression of sympathy with a person who has been engaged in a revolutionary propaganda and has been convicted of participation in crime of a peculiarly heinous kind. I believe that there must have been some gross blunder with regards to this telegram, so alien is such a sentiment to the character and opinions of Sir Henry Cotton. We must await the full text of the speech: I feel that when it is received, it will put a different complexion upon the whole affair. This has already been done to some extent by Sir Henry's brief statement as wired yesterday by Reuter. Meanwhile, I must declare publicly and, I am sure, I am expressing in this matter not only my own feel-

ing but the feeling of you all that if there has been the least suggestion of sympathy with either Savarkar or his co-workers, we dissociate ourselves at once and absolutely from any such suggestions.

You express solicitude for my health, and in your great kindness you assume that in coming to India I have made a personal sacrifice, and incurred a serious risk. Please let me assure you, in the words of the Irishman, that the trouble has been a pleasure. I never enjoyed myself more in my life. And as regards health, you have all taken such care of me, and my dear friend Mr. Gokhale has kept so strict an eye on my proceedings, that I feel all the better for my trip.

It is with deep regret that I say good-bye to you all. India has always been to me a land of friends, and I feel sure that you are ready to extend the hand of friendship to all, whether from the East or the West, that desire to work for the welfare of India. Indeed, I have always thought that the English and Indians ought to get on well together. Each can supply the deficiencies of the other, and the two combined should be able to control the world. On the one hand, the Indian is essentially intellectual and spiritual-minded, but is rather averse to the rough struggles of the material world. On the other hand, the Englishman is naturally rather averse to intellectual subtleties, but is a good all-round man with his hands in dealing with practical affairs. The very difference in their qualifications should draw them together and make them trusty partners in the great work of developing the resources of India. Ladies and Gentlemen, I bid you farewell with my best wishes for the New Year.

RECEPTION AT MADRAS.

I. AT THE MAHAJANA SABHA.

Sir William Wedderburn was presented with an address at the Mahajana Sabha, Madras, on Wednesday, January 11, 1911. *Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao read the following address on behalf of the Sabha*:—

Revered and Beloved Sir.—We deem it a great privilege to be allowed to accord you a cordial welcome on behalf of the Madras Provincial Congress Committee and the Madras Mahajana Sabha. During a full half century in various capacities and under various conditions, through good report and through evil report you have laboured for India, sparing neither time, exertion, nor, we beg leave to add, your private resources. Your work in the British Committee of the Indian National Congress has awakened a deep and widespread interest in the minds of the British public regarding Indian affairs. This has already earned you the undying gratitude of the people of this country, when you added a service of incalculable moment by accepting the Presidentship of the 25th Session of the Indian National Congress. The cheerful readiness with which you acceded to the request of the Reception Committee at Allahabad, despite advancing age and various calls upon your time, will long abide in the memory of a grateful people. Your mission was one of peace—peace among Congressmen, peace between officials and non-officials and peace between Hindus and Mahomedans. You have endeavoured to persuade the leaders of these two great communities that they are the children of a a common mother and that their real welfare depends upon their sinking minor differences and working hand in hand in all matters affecting the interests of the Indian people as a whole. We fully trust that your high mission will be crowned with complete success, for we know that all true Indian hearts have been touched by the example of your earnestness, self-sacrifice and love of humanity. We cannot express adequately our feelings of thankfulness for all that you have done for us, and all that you have endeavoured to do and we sincerely pray that God may grant you many more years of strength and happiness and that you may see the full fruition of your labours and the fulfilment of your hopes for this country and its people.

The address was enclosed in a beautiful casket of cylindrical shape with the inscriptions of Hindu Gods and on it was inscribed

"Presented to Sir William Wedderburn from the Madras Provincial Congress Committee and the Madras Mahajana Sabha."

Sir William who on rising was accorded vociferous cheerings made the following reply :—

Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswamy Rao and Gentlemen,—Your very kind reception to me to-day reminds me of a very pleasant week I passed in your Presidency six years ago, when I not only received a very kindly welcome from you in Madras, but also had an opportunity of visiting the interesting cities and noble temples in Southern India, and this honour you have kindly conferred upon me quite unexpectedly and I confess I felt a little overwhelmed when my friend Mr. Natesan explained to me the programme which you have kindly arranged for this occasion. I thought I had already had all the addresses that I had to receive in India. But he told me that a few words were needed from me in answer to your address, those few words of gratitude to you for the great kindness you have always shown me. With reference to what you say of my visit to India, I can only say that it is an unmitigated pleasure to see you all and the way that you all had worked together in the direction of peace and conciliation which is gratifying to me more than I can tell you. I am glad that you have appreciated the work of the British Committee in England. It does not show much, but I assure you that it is an advantage to have friends always on the watch to see your interests are not neglected. Then, again, as regards the resolutions of the Congress, I must say that the steps towards conciliation between officials and non-officials were between the two great communities of Hindus and Mahomedans who have gone beyond my expectation. For the first time our sympathetic Viceroy has given a friendly recognition to you,

gentlemen of the Congress, and I have noticed in Calcutta a very distinct drawing together both of officials and non-officials and of all the races that we have in India. This is very gratifying indeed. Our deputation in which Madras took an important share was received very sympathetically by His Excellency and, I am sure, everyone was pleased with the spirit in which it was received. As regards the Hindu-Mahomedan Conference at Allahabad, the two great communities were represented by very important leaders. His Highness the Aga Khan, shortening the Conference of the Moslem League at Nagpur by a day, brought influential Mahomedans to the Congress at Allahabad by special train. The Conference consisted about 100 important persons of both communities. Friendly feelings were expressed and both parties had an opportunity of speaking freely what was in their minds. A Committee was appointed to see whether the arrangements could not be made for local Boards of Conciliation for getting rid of the questions which sometimes cause differences of opinion between the two great communities. Any little tension there has been between the two communities is one of quite recent date, and I believe that the feeling now is to let bygones be bygones and that all the people of India shall work together in a friendly co-operation for the good of Mother India. Gentlemen, in my Congress address I said the watchwords were hope, conciliation and united efforts. What I have seen in India—it has only been a short union. My hopes had been confirmed and I believe that conciliation is in the air, and I am convinced by the reformed Council in which people have more and better representation, united effort will tend to the benefit of the whole community.

Again I thank you most heartily for the kindness with

which you received me and for the beautiful casket in which the address was enclosed. (Cheers.)

II ADDRESS AT THE Y.M.C.A.

An enthusiastic reception was accorded to Sir William Wedderburn on the morning of January 12, 1911 *at the Y.M.C.A. Auditorium by the public of Madras. Dewan Bahadur M. Audinarayanayya who presided then made the following speech :—*

Gentlemen,—It is my pleasant duty to say a few words on behalf of all of us who are assembled here to-day, to do honour to Sir William Wedderburn. During a long life he has rendered invaluable service to India and her people. From the many addresses presented to him during his sojourn amongst us he knows in what reverence we hold him. Deep is our sense of gratitude for the solid services he has rendered to our country. We are moved also by an abiding love for his great personality, his transparent sincerity, his large love of humanity, his selfless and untiring efforts to help forward what is right and just in spite of difficulties and also sometimes in spite of ungenerous and uncharitable criticism. These invest his life with special charm to us. His life is an example which we must constantly emulate, if we hope to achieve and progress in our national regeneration. He is above all eminently a man of peace. His emphatic denunciation the other day of all unconstitutional methods or of any slightest sympathy with such methods is characteristic of him. Happily it is also in perfect consonance with the traditional instincts of our people. We are now entering a new and interesting and hopeful chapter in the history of our country and it must be evident ' to the shallowest intellect amongst us that if we are to realise a highest destiny for our country, we can do so only under the beneficent ægis of the *Pax Brittanica* and with the harmonious co-operation of all the different communities in this land ; the dissemination of the message of peace all round has been the special purpose of his present visit to India undertaken at no little risk at his time of the life to his health and personal convenience. India with her centuries—old traditions of toleration furnishes a congenial and helpful ground for the peaceful solutions of many different problems of racial and even international importance. One of the highest titles of our late Sovereign Edward VII. to the gratitude of the world was his constant solicitude for the maintenance of peace. The pursuit of a similar aim, though on a smaller scale has brought our distinguished gentleman, once more amongst us. We are proud of this opportunity of once more meeting and hearing him. In speeding him on his return journey to his happy home we heartily wish him many more years

of health and strength and of usefulness in the cause of humanity. (Cheers.)

Sir Willian Wedderburn made the following reply :—

Dewan Bahadur M. Audinarayanayya and gentlemen,—It is with great pleasure that I meet to-day and to find that our Conference at Allahabad has had an echo here and has met with your approval. I must say that I was in the first instance reluctant to intervene in so grave a matter as any differences between the two great communities in India. It is a domestic question. But I ventured to do so for two reasons first because I felt I was a friend of both parties (cheers) and secondly on account of the great mischief and danger for the welfare of India that arose from the estrangement of these two communities. I am very glad to find that my rashness in this matter was condoned by my friends who met me at Allahabad. This was shown by the fact that they honoured me by inviting me to take the chair at the Conference. His Highness the Aga Khan in a very kindly speech proposed that I should take the chair and that was seconded by the Maharajah of Dharbunga. Perhaps I may just say, in a few words what occurred at the Conference. In the first place after a few words at the opening of the proceedings, His Highness the Aga Khan made a statement on behalf of the Muslim community and then Babu Sarada Charan Mitter on behalf of the Hindus also made a statement. They appeared to me to be statesmanlike utterances. They breathed the spirit of toleration. They pointed out many and important matters in which the interests of the two communities were identical and asked that those matters in which they were not identical should, if possible, be arranged in a friendly way. After the speeches of these two getlemen, there were eight or nine speakers

who freely stated their feelings and their views on this important question. I consider it very valuable that they should freely say what they felt. I have always had a feeling that with the people of this country, the great thing is that they should get a hearing. I remember a poor man coming to me with a great grievance. It was a grievance, I did not see my way when I was Political Secretary to the Government of Bombay to give him much hope of redress. However, he wanted to state his case. Expressly he said, his chathi—his chest—was swollen. I said, " tell me your whole story." He told me the whole story. I asked him whether he had anything more to say. He told me a little more. Anything more, I asked. Nothing more, he said. The consequence was that the chathi was no longer swollen and his blood was cooled. When I told him, I cannot say, I have much hope, though I sympathise with you, he went away perfectly contented and that is a very remarkable characteristic, I think, of the Indian people. Therefore, I consider it important that both sides should have full opportunity to state their views. After that, I am glad to say that a committee was appointed to go into questions of controversy and ultimately to see what could be done especially in the matter of appointing local boards of conciliation because questions in all parts of the country differed from one another and local boards of conciliation seem to one to be a good way of dealing with particular difficulties in a particular locality. I must say they showed the friendly frame of mind they were in. After an equal number of delegates had been appointed from each side for the Moslems and the Hindus, there was a cry that my friend Mr. Gokhale should be added to the committee. He said, " I am a Hindu and that will make too many Hindus." They

all unanimously said : " We do not care whether you are a Hindu or not. You are a friend of us all. We wish that you should be on the Committee." (Cheers.)

I should not conclude my short reference to this matter without saying that the kindly influence and wisdom of your Madras representative gave us very great help in coming to a settlement. I won't mention the names and I have no doubt you know whom I refer to. I think, taking all together, we have made a very good beginning. This is all I would say at first, that we have made a good beginning. There is a good French proverb which says that in a difficult and thorny question it is the first step that causes always difficulty. We are hopeful in the first step we need your help in the matter. We want care, we want toleration and we want self-sacrifice in getting these matters satisfactorily disposed of. We must remember that all Indians belong to one family (cheers) that the two great communities are brothers, and they must be brothers and act in a brotherly way for the good and welfare of mother India.

Well, gentlemen, I only thank you that at so short a notice, you have come together and organised such an important and representative assembly. I thought I was only going to pass Madras in steamer and simply wave good-bye to Madras. It has been a very pleasant surprise to me that you have invited me in this way and given me great encouragement in a matter that I have very much at heart. (Cheers.) I therefore only say good-bye and I should have been very sorry to have missed this opportunity of meeting my old friends and making new friends among you and in saying good-bye I wish all prosperity and happiness to Madras.

III. MR. NATESAN'S BREAKFAST AT THE HOTEL D'ANGELIS.

At 10 a. m., on January 12, 1911, Sir William Wedderburn was entertained to breakfast at the Hotel D'Angelis by Mr. G. A. Natesan. Among those present at the breakfast were: Mr. A. E. Lawson (Sheriff of Madras) Hon'ble Mr. A. G. Cardew, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Krishnaswami Iyer, Mr Mayhew, Mr. J. H. Stone, Mr. A. Y. G. Campbell, Rev. G. Pittendrigh, Hon'ble Mr. T. V. Seshagiri Aiyar, Dewan Bahadur C. Karunakara Menon, Hon'ble Mr. Kuddus Batcha Sahib, Rev. Dr. Lazarus, Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Mr. Ghulam Mahomed Mohajir, Mr. Ewing, Rev. Heiberg, Moulana Abduls Suban Sahib, Mr. Arthur Davies, Prof. K. B. Ramanatha Iyer, Mr. M. V. Masilamony Pillay and Mr. Zeanullabudeen Sahib.

After the breakfast was over Mr. G. A. Natesan proposed the toast of Sir W. Wedderburn. In doing so he said:

I rise to propose the health of our distinguished and honoured guest Sir William Wedderburn, His name is a household word throughout India and I esteem it a privilege that he has kindly found time in spite of the present state of his health to accept my humble hospitality. The one great mission of his life has been the promotion of peace and prosperity to the people of India and of friendly co-operation between the rulers and the ruled. He has always discharged this task with frankness and boldness. Whenever he advises the Government he has done so fearlessly. urged on them the supreme necessity of understanding correctly the aims and aspirations of the people and above all of entering into their minds. Whenever he has spoken to the people and their representatives he has urged them to be moderate in criticism and temperate in language. It is a matter for great satisfaction to all of us that Sir William's labors in the direction of promoting good will between the rulers and the ruled has already borne fruit and that was evidenced by the fact that His Excellency the Viceroy received only the other day a deputation of the Congress, the most accredited and authoritative organisation voicing forth the aims and aspirations of the people of this country. Sir William's cherished ambition has been the promotion of cordial relations between the Hindus and Mussalmans and we can point out with pride, through his kind and sagacious efforts, a joint Conference of the representatives of the Hindus and Mahomedans has been successfully held at Allababad

and that under his own presidency; that in itself was a great achievement of which any one might truly be proud. Gentlemen, I do not wish to detain you long. To me there is no grander, no nobler, spectacle than the sight of this venerable old gentleman coming out to India at such an advanced age as his to preside over the deliberations of the Congress, even at the risk of his life. I ask you to charge to your glasses and drink to the health of Sir William Wedderburn.

Sir William Wedderburn in responding to the toast, thanked Mr. Natesan for his kind entertainment and for the felicitous terms in which he had proposed his health. He was here in this country in 1889, then in 1904, now in 1910. What struck him most was the wonderful changes that had taken place. There was nothing on the present occasion which struck him more than the importance of the existence of true relationship between the officials and non-officials and also between Indians and Anglo-Indians. Mr. Natesan had already dwelt on the sympathetic way in which His Excellency the Viceroy received a deputation from the Congress. It was also shown, he thought, in the better social relations now existing, if he might say so, in the tone of the Press on both sides. When thinking of the different parties in this great country, he was always reminded of the old Fable of the Gold and Silver Shield. They knew how both the knights breathlessly tangled themselves in a quarrel as to what metal the Shield was composed of. Sir William was of opinion that in fact the whole affair in this country was simply a point of view as in the case of those knights. Whenever difficulties arose in the matter of progressive measures granted by Government, the best way of tiding them over was by both the communities acquiescing in a common view. That was what was needed at present for the progress of the country. He was firmly of opinion that the expanded Councils had a great deal to do. The Official Members of the Government, now are slowly seeing their way not only to help the

people but also were taking advantage of every opportunity of acquiring greater familiarity with the people and their customs, and thus get themselves to work together. He had himself seen instances very distinctly. For instance the two great men, Hon'ble Mr. S. P. Sinha and Hon'ble Mr. Ali Imam of the Viceroy's Executive Council were able, whenever measures were being initiated, to let Government know what the popular feelings were on those measures, and Government were enabled to consider all sides of the question before they finally adopted a distinct policy. He might, perhaps, refer to another example of a better friendly relationship, which he observed in Calcutta when on two occasions of entertainments to dinner, he saw prominent men mingling in the most friendly way, members of Council sitting next to them, then the Secretaries and Private Secretaries, perhaps on each side. He would also take this opportunity of thanking those who manage Anglo-Indian presses for the kindly references made to him personally. It was very much gratifying to him that there were symptoms of friendly relations between them and the public and he hoped that cordial relations would always exist in future. He concluded his reply to the toast by once more thanking them heartily for all the kind words spoken of him and bade good bye to them all wishing prosperity and happiness to Madras.

PART VII.

APPRECIATIONS.

At the National Liberal Club, on December 6th, 1889, *Mr. George Yule, ex-President of the Congress, entertained Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., and nearly seventy friends at Luncheon. The following are extracts from letters received and speeches made on the occasion.*

LORD HOBHOUSE.

I am very much obliged to you for giving me the opportunity of paying my respects to Sir William Wedderburn, and I should be very glad to do so, if it were not that the Judicial Committee will be sitting till near Christmas, and I must attend on Fridays up to 4 p.m. Please give my regards and best wishes to him, and accept the same yourself.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN, Bart., M.P.

I am sorry to say I shall be in the North of England on the 6th December, and unable to testify to my great admiration for Sir William Wedderburn.

MR. T. BURT, M.P.

I thank you for yours of the 18th inst. I am sorry that I am not likely to be in London on December 6, or it would be a real pleasure to be present at the proposed luncheon to Sir W. Wedderburn, who is worthy of every honour that his friends can render to him.

MR. F. PINCOTT.

During the whole of his official career he made him

self famous in India by always aiding and often originating objects of good to the people of that country. Then he is not a bird of passage, or one who has been diverted to this duty by some cause; he is only pursuing the even tenor of his way in now aiding this great national movement.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON, Bart., M.P.

I have a very great regard for my friend Sir William Wedderburn. I perhaps may say that I had the honour of the acquaintance of his brother, his predecessor, in the House of Commons, who was one of my most intimate and most valued friends, and I believe a more honourable, earnest, and courageous politician never lived than the late Sir David Wedderburn. (*Cheers.*) I have not long had the honour of the acquaintance of my friend Sir William Wedderburn, but I find in him the same qualities that I found in his brother, and I think that we do ourselves honour in honouring such a man.

MR. W. MARTIN WOOD.

I am exceedingly gratified to be able to be present in order to join in the congratulations to our friend Sir William Wedderburn. I have watched his progress through the Civil Service; I have watched his work, and I wish to say that few can appreciate, as I can, the kind of moral courage required in a man in Sir William Wedderburn's position going back to India to aid not only a non-official movement, but a movement which is regarded with great apprehension by many members of his own service. I think in that respect he ought to be specially honoured. (*Hear, hear.*) I have no doubt he will be equal to the position not only in moral courage but in that discretion and precision which is required.

MR. JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P.

I am glad to have the chance of addressing this most important meeting for one reason, because I admire our friend Sir William Wedderburn, and I believe every course he takes in public life will be a course really conducive to the strength of this Empire by satisfying the just demands of every nationality amongst all those who are grouped under its Imperial government.

MR. W. C. BONNERJEE.

We have in Sir William Wedderburn an ex-official who has throughout his career in this country, extending over 25 years, shown the deepest sympathy with the aspirations of the people of this country, and who is one of the few men in the service who have had the eye to see and the heart to feel that the Government of India, conducted though it may be upon generous principles, is not all that is required for the best interests of the country, and that its institutions require to be liberalized in order that they may harmonize with the conditions of the present day. (*Cheers.*)—*Speech in proposing Sir William to preside over the Fifth Congress, Bombay*, 1889.

RAI BAHADUR P. ANANDA CHARLU.

If the Fifth Indian National Congress is a greater success than any which has preceded it, it is due in a very great measure to the fact that Sir William Wedderburn consented to preside over it. (*Cheers.*) I am not surprised that he cheerfully consented to sacrifice all personal and other considerations because I, who have known him through a great portion of his career, know perfectly well that he has thus given but one more proof of that sympathy and interest which he has felt for this country

during his whole life. (*Cheers.*)—*In moving the Resolution thanking the President, Bombay Congress*, 1889.

HON. PUNDIT SIR SUNDAR LAL.

I regard it a singular good fortune to find that Sir William Wedderburn (*cheers*) is able to be amongst us here to-day. He is a hereditary friend of the Indian people. Who does not remember the services of his late lamented brother, Sir David Wedderburn? Loyal to the service to which he belonged and faithful to the Government which he served, Sir William when he was an official, was no less a friend of the people—of the educated classes, as well as of the inarticulate masses—and it is worth recalling that he did not hesitate to attend and give the benefit of his advice to the first Congress, in the very city in which he was still in service.

Of Sir William's work for India after retirement, what can I say which will at all adequately convey what you and I do feel and what every Indian feels? He has lived what Mr. Haldane would have called a dedicated life. What man, living or dead, Englishman or Indian, has done more than our honoured President-elect for the political advancement and material amelioration of India? What has he not braved and borne for us and our motherland? I rejoice to think that the Indian National Congress is to have the honour of having him for its President for a second time, and that that honour has been reserved to my city and our United Provinces (*cheers*).—*Welcome Address, Allahabad Congress*, 1910.

HON. BABU SURENDRANATH BANERJEA.

Sir William does not come to us as a stranger. President of a former Congress, he has again been invited to assume the responsibilities of that great office. He is a

commanding figure in the public life of modern India. . . . When the history of our times comes to be written by such men—to Sir William Wedderburn will be accorded a high and honourable place among those who by their labours and self-sacrifice have contributed to the up-building of Indian political life and the furtherance of India's political progress. In the muster-roll of distinguished Englishmen, who have loved India with an abounding love and have served her with passionate devotion, Sir William Wedderburn will be one of the most distinguished. How many of us, children of the soil, whose bones will rest here, whose interests, sympathies and reminiscences are centred in this ancient land, can claim to have exhibited in the record of their life-work, the selfless devotion, the unflinching self-sacrifice and the supreme love for India and her peoples, which have always been the dominating features in the public career of Sir William Wedderburn. (*Cheers*).

If it is true that the unrest, of which we hear so much, and much of which, in the words of Lord Minto, is legitimate, is due to the impact of British influences and of Western civilization, it is true in an equal sense, that the public spirit, which glows in the bosoms of so many of us, has derived its first impulse and its living inspiration from the examples of great and good Englishmen like Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Allan Hume, Sir Henry Cotton (*cheers*) and others. They lit the torch which now burns in us with a steady flame and which, I trust, sooner or later—sooner rather than later—will illumine the whole Indian continent. Milton sang of his life as self-consecrated in the service of God. Of Sir William Wedderburn we say that his is a dedicated life in the service of India. Fifty years ago he came out to this country as an official

—as a member of the Indian Civil Service. But he was truly an Indian patriot in the garb of an English official. If Sir William Wedderburn's lot had been cast in more superstitious times, his contemporaries would have regarded him as the incarnation of some great Hindu Mahatma born again in the flesh for the well-being of his people.

As an official, Sir William Wedderburn preferred the interests of the people to those of his own service. The people were the objects of his most anxious concern. His love for the masses was deep and abiding. He was a pioneer of the Agricultural Banks and Arbitration Boards, of which we hear so much in these days; and when he retired, it was amid the regrets of a whole nation. When they presented him with a purse, he made it over to the Bombay Presidency Association for the political advancement of the people. This utter selflessness and absolute dovotion to the interests of India and her people have been the dominant characteristics of Sir William Wedderburn's public life. In his retirement he has been ceaseless in his endeavours for the welfare of India. If at this moment there is a wider and deeper interest felt in England in regard to Indian affairs than has been the case within the lifetime of this generation, the result, apart from the large general causes which have been operative in that direction, is, to some extent at least, due to the efforts of Sir William Wedderburn and his colleagues on the British Committee.—*Allahabad Congress*, 1910.

HON. SIR D. E. WACHA.

Here is Sir William Wedderburn, who has unceasingly, amidst much abuse, amidst much obloquy, through the long time of twenty-five years, devotedly worked for our cause. Sir William Wedderburn's name is a household word amongst us, and I think, sir, that in asking him to-

day to preside over our Congress and conferring the honour of the Presidentship upon him for the second time, this Congress is doing nothing more than its duty and is honouring itself.—*Speech at the Allahabad Congress*, 1910.

HON. RAO BAHADUR R. N. MUDHOLKAR.

I regard the call of the Chairman of the Reception Committee as a call to duty, as a call on myself and all my countrymen here to make their humble and grateful acknowledgments to one of the greatest Englishmen, I should say, to one of the greatest of living men who have devoted themselves to the good of mankind and especially to the good of fallen races.

It is nearly forty years since I first heard the name of Sir William Wedderburn. He was then in service and from that time his name had reached not only those who took part in the politics of Western India, but even the schools and colleges and places remote and distant in the mofussil. He was then known as the great friend of the ryot. We afterwards came to know him as the great friend of the educated people. Later on when we saw more of his character we came to know him as the great friend of Indians, and now that we knew him better, we should say he is one of the very best friends of the Empire.

To me it appears that the greatest service which he has rendered to the British Empire is to redeem the character of Englishmen (*Cheers*). There have been too many occurrences, too many episodes, too many utterances, which to a person of his temperament, to all men who value high thinking, to all men who value charity, there are, I say, too many things of that kind said and done which would bring blush to their cheeks. It is men like

Sir William Wedderburn who confirm men's faith in the goodness of the human mind, and it is because there are persons like Sir William Wedderburn amongst Englishmen that those, who still pin their faith to constitutional reform, work amid the difficulties which surround them. *Speech at the Allahabad Congress*, 1910.

THE HON. N. SUBBA RAO.

It has always appeared to me that British statesmanship has been saved by Englishmen like Sir William Wedderburn in dealing with the complex problems of this country, problems which are said to baffle the highest statesmanship of the greatest men. It is men of the broadest sympathies which Sir William and others like him possess that enable them to penetrate, as it were, behind the veil and look deep into the situation and guide us on to a safe haven.—*Speech at the Allahabad Congress*, 1910.

A complimentary dinner was given at the Westminster Palace Hotel on the 23rd of November, 1910, to Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., on the eve of his departure from England for India to preside over the forthcoming session of the Indian National Congress. The Rt. Hon. Lord Courtney of Penwith presided. Sir Henry Cotton announced that letters expressing regret had been received from various gentlemen who were unable to attend. The following are some of the letters bearing remarkable testimony to the worth and character of Sir William Wedderburn: —

LORD WEARDALE.

No one is more worthy of honour than Sir William Wedderburn with respect to his lifelong services to the true interests of the Indian people.

THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS BURT, M.P.

He held Sir William in the highest esteem and wished every success to the banquet.

MR. FREDERIC HARRISON.

It was impossible for him to travel to London, but joined with all his friends at home and in India in wishing Sir William a good journey and success in his task as president.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD, M. P.

Sir William deserves all the honour you can give him, and nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to have been with you had it been possible.

MR. A. J. WILSON.

" Of all Anglo-Indians living he most deserves well of his country, and the small measure of political freedom thus far granted to the peoples of India is the direct product of the work he and his supporters in this country and among our Indian fellow-citizens have done in connection with the Indian Congress. It used to be the fashion to deride that 'amateur volunteer of nobodies and busybodies,' as I have heard it described, but that fashion has gone by, and the rulers of India have begun to isten with respect, if still with a measure of superciliousness, to what the Congress has to say or demand. I hope Sir William Wedderburn's visit to India as president of the forthcoming Congress will mark a further step in the progress towards freedom and I feel sure that on a survey of the past he will be able to speak words of hope to the delegates. He himself is the very personification of cheerful hopefulness.

SIR. GEORGE BIRDWOOD, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

Not the less heartily am I with you all in this tribute to the personal worth and character of Sir W. Wedderburn, the disinterestedness of whose services to India, and his love for India and its great historical peoples, does not only credit to himself personally, but to all of us, his countrymen—English, Welsh, and Irish, as well as Scotch—to-day the best Englishman of us all. It is, therefore, a deep disappointment to me to be absent on so interesting an occasion.

MR. HART-DAVIES.

No one has ever worked more strenuously for the good of India than Sir William Wedderburn has throughout his long career, and it is but fitting that we should show our appreciation not only of his past work, but of the devotion to the cause of good Government in India which leads him to go out this year as president of the National Congress. I am sure that his visit to the place of his former labours will be productive of good, and the restoration of that harmony between all classes, English or Indian, which we all have so much at heart.

COLONEL HANNA.

Sir William has the hearty good wishes for a safe and pleasant voyage and a successful Congress from one who appreciates the good work he has done for India.

SIR ALFRED THOMAS, M.P.

Allow me to say how greatly I appreciate the splendid services rendered by Sir William Wedderburn to the people of India, and how worthy he is of the distinguished position of President of the Indian National Congress.

SIR HERBERT ROBERTS, M.P.

It is with very sincere regret that I find myself obliged to leave London for Wales this afternoon in order to be on the spot in my constituency for the coming election. I know that you will realise that I would not be absent from the dinner to-night had it in any way been possible for me to be present. I can only, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for all your kindness to me and for your support of the many causes in which I am deeply interested.

Although I am well aware of the cost to you in time, labour, and anxiety involved in such a journey as you are now undertaking, I have not a shadow of doubt that you will have a rich reward in the consciousness that you have done a great service to the people of India.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE, M.P.

He was anxious to be present to show his appreciation of the sterling qualities of Sir W. Wedderburn and his lifelong devotion to and championship of the rights of the people of this country and of the Indian Empire.

MR. MACKARNESS.

He expressed his deep regret at not being present, "for I was specially anxious to join in doing honour to you, and expressing my appreciation of the great public service you are doing in going out to India at this crisis, for which all well-wishers of the Empire ought to be deeply grateful to you."

MR. WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT.

It would have given me the greatest pleasure to do honour in any form to Sir William Wedderburn, and especially now that he is returning to India as president-

elect of the National Congress. No Englishman in my opinion, deserves so well of India or has worked for her so persistently or so successfully. If I had been able to be present at your entertainment, I should have liked to have added my voice to those who seek to awaken the Mahomedan community of India to a sense of the necessity there is for them, if they would share the full advantages of the coming self-government of their country, to hold aloof no longer from the Congress movement, which has already obtained so much in the direction of freedom from foreign domination, and which in the near future will certainly obtain for India more. Their abstention twenty years ago may have been then excusable, in view of the attitude of their fellow-Moslems in Turkey, Persia, and Egypt who have all declared themselves in favour of free institutions; a persistence in that abstention can hardly be other than unworthy and unwise.

THE RT. HON. G. W. E. RUSSELL.

I had hoped to be among the guests assembled to do you honour, but unfortunately the fog of yesterday got hold of me, and I must not venture out to-night. I deeply regret that I thus miss the opportunity of publicly testifying my high respect for your devotion to the cause of our Indian fellow-subjects, as well as for the exalted and consistent course which you have followed in the field of general politics.

THE RT. HON. LORD COURTNEY.

They had heard from the letters just read how justly high Sir William stood in the estimation of those who were interested in the welfare of India. (*Hear, hear.*) It was no exaggeration to repeat the praise to be found in more than one of them—it was no exaggeration to say that no

man of their time had shown himself a keener friend of the people of India or had more lavishly spent his force, time, money and labour for their benefits. He was now crowning his great career by going out to preside once more at the National Congress. (*Cheers.*) Sir William was happy in coming from a family which had been connected with the Government of India for more than a century. His father was in the Service before him, and other connections of his had been associated with the Government of the great Dependency. He himself got his position in the Civil Service by free and open competition, and his claims were strengthened by the inheritance and remembrance of what his father and his kinsmen had done before him. Sir William was doubly happy in the circumstances of his associations with India. (*Hear, hear.*) Though he entered the Service by free competition through examination, he had the memories of the past around him and the associations of his earliest years gave him a knowledge of the traditions and habits of the Civil Service which proved of inestimable value. In addition to that he was full of the sentiment of good will towards the people committed to his charge, sentiments which had animated him throughout the whole of his career. No one would venture to disparage the great service he had done, and least of all would he (Lord Courtney) join in any disparagement of the incomparable work accomplished for this Kingdom—(*cheers*)—and for India by men who had been sent from time to time to administer the affairs of the State in India. No doubt the Indian Civil Service had its failings. It was liable to lapse into a bureaucracy and officialism. It was liable to become a set apart. But even when the feeling of aloofness and separation did not arise, still the position of

those who came from England to rule in India might develop a feeling, as it were, of a patronising character which was inimical to the best influences which should be exercised in the service of the State. Now Sir William, partly through his character, partly through traditions, and partly through the education he had received, went to India as one would go to his home. He made it his home; he worked among his fellows, and he did not pose as a mere benefactor from above; he was at once a citizen and a servant of the State in his capacity as servant and subsequently as judge. It was a great test of the feelings which he inspired that, having served in a very high position and returned to this country, he should have been chosen to preside at one of the earliest National Congresses. That was the most striking proof that could be given of the sympathy of Sir William with the national movement in India. He was not content to be a mere promoter of the welfare of the inhabitants of India; he was not content merely to develop their trade, their industries, and their well-being—he sympathised with their understandings and their aspirations to share in the government of their own country. (*Cheers.*) He was willing to receive and to listen to their counsels and to bring to them the wisdom of his own experience as well as to receive from them the wisdom of theirs. (*Cheers.*) In this way he went out more than 20 years ago to serve as president of the National Congress. At home he has served as a member of Parliament, he was the head of the Famine Union, he was a member of the Finance Commission, and was chairman of the Political Committee of the House of Commons, he had been of infinite, untiring service to the cause of India. (*Cheers.*) That was all within their knowledge and remembrance—

(*hear, hear*)—but it was well to recall these things now that he was going out for the second time to fill a great position, requiring alertnesss of mind, assurance of judgment, and aptness of decision. He was afraid that Sir William and himself were not in the possession of the strength they once enjoyed, but he confessed he envied their guest to think that he should be ready to go out again to assume the post he was destined to fill. No one could say of him that he was a mere winter visitor —(laughter)—no one could laugh at him by suggesting that he was a globe-trotting M. P., making a few notes on his journeys to be reproduced in the next Indian Budget debate in the House of Commons. His position, information, and knowledge were such that all who were highly interested in the Government of India might well envy. Not that he was disposed for one moment to allow the justice of the criticisms of those officials who complain of criticisms which came from men who had not themselves been trained as officials and had not passed laborious lives in India. Nothing could be more idle, nothing could be more easily condemned by the experiences of the past than this opinion that no one should criticise the Government of India who had not been or served in that country. Men who had thought most deeply about their position and their responsibilities, the men who gave the most pregnant hints as to the conduct of our Government and the goal at which we should endeavour to arrive, who had been acquainted with its very needs, the men who by reason of the investigations they had earnestly and sincerely pursued understood the real principles of Liberalism, and in that connection he was tempted to recall the names of Henry Fawcett and John Bright. He believed that Henry Fawcett was never out of England

certainly he was never out of Europe, and he knew nothing of India from personal knowledge, yet by his very sympathy, honesty, and sincerity he was never flagging in his good will for India, for which it was said he became a member of the House of Commons. They all turned back to his memory as that of one who afforded in his person the best vindication of claims and needs of those who had nothing to do with the Government of India. He remembered, and Sir Charles Dilke would remember, how when Mr. Fawcett was pursuing his work in the House of Commons he was subjected to ridicule, and was the butt of the unworthy, but opinions of that nature with respect to his memory had now passed away and he simply recalled that fact in order to remind those at whom stones were thrown that they might well take comfort in thinking that stones had also been thrown at others who had preceded them. He had particularly in mind, in that thought, a friend who had not been able to join them that evening—Mr. Mackarness—(*cheers*)—who was suffering under this visitation of stones. He was not the first to be attacked in this manner, but the time might come when the successors of those who were persecuting him would be found building monuments in his honour. These unjust attacks he recalled for the purpose of showing it was but a reflection of the manner in which Indian officials in Mr. Fawcett's time decried his powers and misconstrued his work. The Under-Secretary of our time had better bethink himself of the examples of his predecessors, whose names were forgotten, and whose words were only remembered as a lesson of what to avoid. (*Loud cheers.*) He would now return to the more congenial task of inviting them to drink the health of Sir William Wedderburn and to wish him a good voyage,

hoping to see the fulfilment of his great duty with honourable triumph, and in good time to welcome him home once more. (*Cheers.*) They might be quite certain that nothing would be wanting on Sir William's part to make his visit to India beneficial to the people of that great country. (*Loud cheers.*)

SIR CHARLES DILKE.

It would be unpardonable to follow at any length the observations of the Chairman when one remembered how absolutely perfect was the speech he had delivered in proposing the health of Sir William Wedderburn. (*Hear, hear.*) If ever he heard a speech which conveyed in the highest language of almost inspired statesmanship the very dominant considerations of the moment partly personal, but mainly extending far beyond the personality of their friend, it was the one in which Lord Courtney put before them exactly that which they wished to have said and in exactly the language which would command the assent of the people of India. (*Hear, hear.*) But although it would be unpardonable for him to speak at any length, he could not refuse to say a very few words from a more personal point of view perhaps in reference to Sir William Wedderburn. That portion of Lord Courtney's speech which touched him most was that which showed how their guest of that evening united all that was best in the old and all that was best in the new and modern. (*Hear, hear.*) It was in 1860 he believed that Sir William Wedderburn secured his appointment among the first batch who underwent the educational test, and it was in 1873 that he himself first met Sir William. Those of them who had hereditary connection with the East India Company knew the good side of that system and were not blind to its faults. To the names of those

mentioned by Lord Courtney as illustrative of what had been done for India, he might have added that of John Stuart Mill. In those days the necessity for reform was realised, and the changes had been brought about through the efforts of such men as Sir William, whose services they were commemorating that night. Some sections of the people of India were patient and some sections were impatient: there might be in the opinion of some too much unrest, but they knew the evils which were the cause of that unrest, and all they had to do was to remove them. There was much exaggeration abroad as to the actual danger of the situation: it was a painful situation, no doubt, but it could be utilised for the credit of the people and to the advantage of the whole world. The element of danger was surely most obviously exaggerated. Let them look at the military map of India. They heard boasts of the ability of the Government of India to put nine or ten divisional corps in the field. That surely was proof of the permanent security of India. Was there a country in the world so densely populated as that enormous tract which possessed half the commercial railways of India? Yet in undivided Bengal there was only one division of troops, whose services were never needed, and that country was at perfect peace so far as armed resistance to the law was concerned. Let them be confident in the purposes and ability of the Legislature to promote the welfare of the country. (*Hear, hear.*) With regard to Sir William, he well knew the value of the great services he had rendered to India and like Lord Courtney, he felt sure that in the great patriotic duty he was about to undertake their guest that evening would meet with every success. He had undertaken the visit at exactly the right moment, and they all wished him God-speed. (*Cheers.*)

SIR PHEROZESHAH MEHTA.

The presence of Lord Courtney that evening was, he ventured to say, one of the highest testimonials they could have to the work of Sir William Wedderburn. It not only added weight and dignity to their proceedings, but it also impressed upon them the appreciative hall-mark of the possession by Sir William Wedderburn of the qualities so honourably known in connection with the chairman himself—thorough sobriety of thought and judgment with fearless independence of action. (*Cheers.*) Having, as he had, known Sir William for many more years than he would care to confess, were he an old lady, he could scarcely trust himself to speak of him without appearing to indulge in verbal exaggeration and high-flown sentiment. It was more nearly half than a quarter of a century since he first knew Sir William as the same high-souled, high-minded, warm-hearted, perfect gentleman they saw, knew and honoured him that day. As the Poet Laureate of the last century made them familiar with the ideal knights of the round table who went about the country redressing the grievances of others, he, although he was not supposed to be a sentimental person in his own country, would venture to compare Sir William with one of those knights—(*hear, hear*)—for even now he was going out to India to perform a great task, and his departure was being viewed with some anxiety by those who were near and dear to him. But they realised that he would never allow the call of duty to appeal to him in vain. (*Cheers.*) He was therefore going out on a mission of peace and good will and harmony. For the last forty years he had been their friend, their philosopher, and their guide—a sagacious guide, a thoughtful and sympathetic philosopher and a true nd noble friend of the people of India of all classes an

all creeds, of Hindus and Mahomedans alike, as well as of Parsees, if he might presume to say so. To all of them he had been guide, philosopher, and friend through good report and through evil report; and, speaking of evil report, he would like to make one observation. Nothing surprised and distressed the people in India more than the way in which Sir William Wedderburn and those who, like him, as servants of the Crown, endeavoured to point out the shortcomings of the Indian Civil Service and to redress evils and bring about reform, were attacked and denounced as disloyal and traitors to the Service. It was the angry critics in India who failed in their duty, and who were disloyal to the people—the princes, peasants, merchants and traders from whose pockets was extracted the money required to pay the wages and pensions of Indian officials. (*Hear, hear.*) It was the angry critics who gave expression to exaggerated cries of alarm at sedition and disloyalty and who called for indiscriminate repression. He purposely used the phrase "indiscriminate repression" because the two worst of these measures—the Seditious Meetings Act and the Press Act of 1910—were impotent to reach those for whom they were said to be intended. Measures such as these were successful only in gagging and harassing people who were certainly not less loyal than the critics. Men like Sir William were among the most valuable assets of the British Empire in India, and if the natives of the country had not lost faith in the political instincts of the British people and in the genius of British statesmanship it was because of their appreciation of the high character of men like Sir William Wedderburn and Sir Henry Cotton. It was owing to the existence of men like them that Indians were over and over again saved from dark despair, then they grew weary

and sick at heart at the sight of redress and reform temperately and moderately urged, and scornfully repulsed or interminably deferred. They were told in India that the greatness of the British character depended upon its material strength and power, but that certainly was not in accord with Indian opinion: it was the work of great administrators and their personal influence which had done much to weld the Empire together, and he was sure that the reforms inaugurated by Lord Morley and Lord Minto were but an indication of that statesmanship which would stimulate in a great degree the beneficial march of events and raise the destinies of that great dependency. In fact, the future progress of India would be greatly stimulated by these great measures of provident statesmanship. He was aware that the view was largely held that the reforms had been seriously marred by the rules issued under the scheme and by the introduction of what was alleged to be preferential treatment. It could not be denied that there was much truth in this criticism, but from a long experience of public authority in India he ventured to say that the irritation and the sense of injustice would die away, and that men of all classes and communities would soon learn to work together for common political aims, interests and aspirations. Sir William was going out to India with the object of removing as far as possible any feeling of unfairness which might exist as to the regulations laid down for the working of the new reforms. They wished him God-speed in his mission, and they felt assured that his wise efforts would bring about a higher feeling of comradeship between the different classes, creeds, and interests than had ever before existed. They must not make too much of the differences between Hindus and Mahomedans, they might be separated in

their creeds, but they had a common nationality. (*Cheers.*) There was a good deal of talk about differences and antagonisms, but under the stress of British rule itself a nationality of common political feeling and activity was fast growing among the Indian peoples. Again he wished Sir William a safe voyage and a successful mission. (*Loud Cheers.*)

SIR HENRY COTTON.

There was, perhaps, no one in that room who had been more closely associated with Sir William Wedderburn for many years than he had been. They were members of the same Service, they served together in India, although in different Presidencies, and in this country, too, they had, always been fighters in the same field. No one, therefore, was in a better position than he was to appreciate the splendid qualities of Sir William Wedderburn and the great services he had performed on behalf of India. No one could more appreciate those splendid services, and if there was one thing he admired more than another, it was courage which Sir William had invariably displayed, and not least, the courage he was now showing, for although he was far from a young man he was responding to the call of duty and was again proceeding to the country he loved so well to render that very inestimable aid which it was in his power and his will to afford to their fellow-countrymen in India. (*Cheers*) His speech that evening had commanded their earnest attention and most profound sympathy. It was, as Sir P. Mehta had told them, men like Sir William who were the best and truest friends of the community and of the members of his own service. The kindly and friendly relations he had always maintained with the people of whom he was in charge, was the best proof they could have of the value of his work as well as

an assurance that in his coming visit he would be able to exercise most valuable influence in reconciling the people to new conditions and in adjusting the differences, which had unfortunately grown up. He, too, would like to add one word in corroboration of what had fallen from Sir. P. M. Mehta with regard to the relations between the different castes, races, and creeds in India. He had lived in India for many years, and if there was one thing more than another which had made its mark on the history of India during the last half century it was the growing unity, the growing identity of interests, the growing community of interest among all classes, and especially among Mahomedans and Hindus. There might have been some friction of late years, but that he regarded as a mere nothing: it was a ruffling of the current. Undoubtedly there was a growing assimilation towards unity and towards one great nationality in India embracing all classes and all creeds. A great responsibility rested upon the Government both in India and in this country to bring peace and rest to that distressful country. (*Hear, hear.*) It had always been the ideal of statesmen, and their pride as well that their function was to so train and guide the people that they would ultimately be qualified for self-government. But they heard little of that now: he wished he could have heard more of it from Lord Morley. They had an instance of what the Americans had done in the Philippines : and he would like to see Great Britain vie with America in this noble object of training peoples for self-government. He joined with them in wishing Sir William Wedderburn God-speed and increased success in his task of further uplifting the people for whom he had already done so much. (*Cheers*).

THE HON. MR. G. K. GOKHALE.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is my privilege now to move that our most cordial thanks be accorded to our President, Sir William Wedderburn, (*cheers*) for the great trouble he has taken in coming to India to preside over this Assembly and for his devoted labours in guiding aright the deliberations of the Congress. Gentlemen, on the opening day of this Congress in installing Sir William in the chair, as also to-day in moving a vote of thanks to the British Committee, our distinguished countryman Babu Surendranath Banerjea (*cheers*) has spoken of Sir William's lifelong services to India with an eloquence and a felicity of expression all his own; and to what he has said, several prominent members of this Congress have also already added their own tributes. I will not, therefore, occupy you for more than a very few minutes. And, as a matter of fact, it is really unnecessary for me or for anybody else to say anything to commend this resolution to your enthusiastic and unanimous approval. Gentlemen, we are bound to feel that any acknowledgment of the services which Sir William has rendered to this country, no matter from whom it comes, or no matter how it is made, is bound to be a most inadequate expression of the feelings which rise uppermost in our hearts at the mere thought of all that we owe to him for all that he has felt for us, for all that he has hoped for us, for all that he has done for us, for all that he has borne and braved for us. That being so, I really think that I need not occupy much of your time; but there are two or three things which I hope you will permit me to say. Sir William before he left England mentioned, at the gathering which had assembled to do him honour, that on the 25th November he was to complete the 50th year of his service

in the cause of the people of this country. It is almost a coincidence that this period of 50 years is divided into almost two equal parts the first half being his period of service as an official and the second half being his period of work as our trusted leader in England. (*Cheers*). Now even when Sir William was serving in this country as an official, he was doing more than any other official of his time on our side to bring the two races closer together, I remember the words of my great master, Mr. Ranade, (*cheers*) once telling me that among all the Englishmen whom he had known, there was none to be put on the side of Sir William. That was while he was an official, but after his retirement, he has thrown himself heart and soul into her work and India has held his whole heart to the exclusion of every other subject; and for the last 25 years he has laboured for us in England, he has watched for us in England, he has fought for us in England as no other man of our time has done. During these 25 years everything that he has undertaken has been entirely for the sake of India. For our sake he went into Parliament, for our sake he left Parliament, for our sake he made friends, for our sake he entered into hostilities, for our sake he undertook the most menial service and lasting work that can be undertaken. Nothing was too small or too laborious for him to undertake, if only it was for the good of India. If this has been his work during 50 years, was it any wonder that when Sir William came to know that it was the wish of the United Provinces that he should come over to preside at this Congress that he readily assented to do so? That he undertook this mission in spite of the dissuasions of those nearest and dearest to him, in spite of the advice of his doctor, in spite of the grave anxiety of his friends, was not to be wondered at. It was sufficient for him to

see that his coming out to India would be of use to India and even at his great advanced age and his impaired health, he undertook this voyage in order to preside over our deliberations here. (*Cheers*). Well, that in itself would entitle him to our enduring gratitude, but the manner in which, he has guided us during these stormy days, the manner in which he has given every moment of his time and thought to our work from the moment he landed up to the present, has filled every one of us with the utmost admiration and gratitude. I have had special opportunities of watching him during these days and I may tell you that from the moment he landed, his one thought has been how to bring these proceedings to a harmonious and successful close. Sir William has guided our deliberations with wisdom and insight that are altogether his own, his wisdom born of long experience and insight that is his by nature; and in addition to the wisdom and insight he also brought to bear on his task, great tact, great patience and great gentleness, and if the proceedings have proved to be so successful as I am sure everybody will agree that they have, the credit is mainly due to Sir William's presence in the chair. I will say one thing more and conclude. Why is it that Sir William has done all this for us?. Why is it that he has come all this distance?. Why is it that he has been taking all this trouble for the last 25 years, if we exclude his official career? Well the answer to this is twofold. Part of the answer is that he could not help it, that it was in his very composition, that he was so made; this would be part of the answer. The other part of the answer is based on this, namely, that by temperament, by nature, Sir William is one of the most fair-minded of men that exist anywhere. His strong, stern, absolute sense of justice has been responsible for making him do

all this work. He saw that the present arrangements were not just to the people of this country and he has thrown himself heart and soul to make them more just and to set right the injustice done to the people of this country. Then again we all know how deep, how passionate is his attachment to the cause of humanity in general. Wherever there is wrong, Sir William's sympathy goes straight to that place. His deep attachment to the cause of humanity—it is that that has sent him in this direction. These two are general grounds. That is his composition and that is how he is made; but in addition to these two there have been two other causes. The first is his deep, his abounding love for the people of this country, love that has stood all tests, such tests, that even Indians themselves will not be able to stand. Certainly his love for India was more than that of most Indians, and certainly more than that of any Englishman. He has loved us in spite of our defects. He has always been ready to overlook our faults and he has been always anxious to make most of any good points in us and he has always asked us to go on, cheering us forward encouraging us when we have done well and always standing by us whether we have done well or ill. That is one source of the work that he has done for us and the other one is his faith in the people of India. His faith in the people of India is, indeed, a part of his great personality. He has believed in us inspite of the obloquy of his own countrymen. He has believed in us in spite of appearances. He has believed us in spite of ourselves. It is because he has so believed in us that he has been able to work through sunshine and storm and through good report and evil report in England all these 25 years, and having done this work we find him now at his great age coming to help us

in our difficulties, trying to smooth matters for us; and I am sure that among the many services he has rendered to the people of India, this will be regarded as the greatest and most crowning achievement. I really do not wish to say anything more and I should not have said even so much as this. The picture of this great venerable rishi of modern times, who has done this work for us is a picture that is too venerable, too beautiful, too inspiring for words: it is a picture to dwell upon lovingly and reverentially and it is a picture to contemplate in silence. I commend, therefore, that this proposition which I have moved should be carried amidst acclamation.—*Speech in moving a vote of thanks to the President, Sir William Wedderburn, at the Allahabad Congress*, 1910.

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